VISVA-BHARATI LIBRARY



PRESENTED BY

FABLES

0 F

LA FONTAINE

Vol. II.



FABLES

o F

LA FONTAINE.

ILLUSTRATED

ВY

J. J. GRANDVILLE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

By ELIZUR WRIGHT, JR.

Vol. II.

SECOND EDITION.

BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY ELIZUR WRIGHT, JR.

TAPPAN AND DENNET.

NEW YORK: WILLIAM A. COLMAN.

M.DCCC.XLI.

ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1841, BY ELIZUR WRIGHT, JR., IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS.

STEREOTYPED AT THE BOSTON TYPE AND STEREOTYPE FOUNDRY.





TO MADAM DE MONTESPAN.

THE apologue is from the immortal gods; Or, if the gift of man it is, Its author merits apotheosis. Whoever magic genius lauds Will do what in him lies To raise this art's inventor to the skies. It hath the potence of a charm, On dulness lays a conquering arm, Subjects the mind to its control, And works its will upon the soul. O lady, armed with equal power, If e'er, within celestial bower, With messmate gods reclined, My muse ambrosially hath dined, Lend me the favor of a smile On this her playful toil. If you support, the tooth of time will shun, And let my work the envious years outrun. If authors would themselves survive, To gain your suffrage they should strive.

On you my verses wait to get their worth;
To you my beauties all will owe their birth,—

For beauties you will recognize Invisible to other eyes.

Ah! who can boast a taste so true,

Of beauty or of grace,

In either thought or face?

For words and looks are equal charms in you. Upon a theme so sweet, the truth to tell,

My muse would gladly dwell:

But this employ to others I must yield; —

A greater master claims the field.

For me, fair lady, 'twere enough

Your name should be my wall and roof.

Protect henceforth the favored book

Through which for second life I look.

In your auspicious light,

These lines, in envy's spite,

Will gain the glorious meed,

That all the world shall read.

"Tis not that I deserve such fame; —

I only ask in Fable's name, •

(You know what credit that should claim;)

And, if successfully I sue,

A fane will be to Fable due, —

A thing I would not build - except for you.





THE AMERICANCE MANGARIES IN IA DESCRIB



PABLE FIRST.

THE ANIMALS SICK OF THE PLAGUE.



HE sorest ill that Heaven hath

Sent on this lower world in wrath, —

The plague, (to call it by its name,)

One single day of which

Would Pluto's ferryman enrich, —

Waged war on beasts, both wild and tame.

They died not all, but all were sick:

No hunting now, by force or trick,

To save what might so soon expire. No food excited their desire; Nor wolf nor fox now watched to slay The innocent and tender prey.

The turtles fled: So love and therefore joy were dead. The lion council held, and said: My friends, I do believe This awful scourge, for which we grieve, Is for our sins a punishment Most righteously by Heaven sent. Let us our guiltiest beast resign, · A sacrifice to wrath divine. Perhaps this offering, truly small, May gain the life and health of all. By history we find it noted That lives have been just so devoted. Then let us all turn eyes within, And ferret out the hidden sin. Himself let no one spare nor flatter, But make clean conscience in the matter. For me, my appetite has played the glutton Too much and often upon mutton. What harm had e'er my victims done?

I answer, fruly, None.

Perhaps, sometimes, by hunger pressed,
I've eat the shepherd with the rest.
I yield myself, if need there be;
And yet I think, in equity,
Each should confess his sins with me;

For laws of right and justice cry, The guiltiest alone should die.

Sire, said the fox, your majesty
Is humbler than a king should be,
And over-squeamish in the case.

What! cating stupid sheep a crime?
No, never, sire, at any time.
It rather was an act of grace,
A mark of honor to their race.

And as to shepherds, one may swear, The fate your majesty describes, Is recompense less full than fair

For such usurpers o'er our tribes.

Thus Renard glibly spoke,
And loud applause from flatterers broke.
Of neither tiger, boar, nor bear,
Did any keen inquirer dare
To ask for crimes of high degree;

The fighters, biters, scratchers, all From every mortal sin were free;

The very dogs, both great and small, Were saints, as far as dogs could be.

The ass, confessing in his turn,
Thus spoke in tones of deep concern:
I happened through a mead to pass;
The monks, its owners, were at mass;
Keen hunger, leisure, tender grass,

And add to these the devil too, All tempted me the deed to do.

vol. 11.

I browsed the bigness of my tongue;
Since truth must out, I own it wrong.
On this, a hue and cry arose,
As if the beasts were all his foes:
A wolf, haranguing lawyer-wise,
Denounced the ass for sacrifice—
The bald-pate, scabby, ragged lout,
By whom the plague had come, no doubt.
His fault was judged a hanging crime.

What! eat another's grass? O shame! The noose of rope and death sublime, For that offence, were all too tame! And soon poor Grizzle felt the same.

Thus human courts acquit the strong, And doom the weak, as therefore wrong.







THE ILL-MARRIED.

Ir worth and beauty always wedded were,
To-morrow I would seek a wife;
But since divorce has come between the pair,
Fair forms not being homes of souls as fair,
Excuse my choice of single life.

Of married folks a multitude
I've seen, but still have never rued
Or longed to quit my solitude.
Yet of our race almost four quarters
Brave Hymen's torch — intrepid martyrs.
Four quarters, also, soon repent —
Too late, however, to recant.
My tale makes one of these poor fellows,
Who sought relief from marriage vows,
Send back again his tedious spouse,
Contentious, covetous, and jealous.
With nothing pleased or satisfied,
This restless, comfort-killing bride
Some fault in every one descried.
Her good man went to bed too soon,

Or lay in bed till almost noon. Too cold, too hot, - too black, too white, -Were on her tongue from morn till night. The servants mad and madder grew; The husband knew not what to do. 'Twas, Dear, you never think or care; And, Dear, that price we cannot bear; And, Dear, you never stay at home; And, Dear, I wish you would just come; — Till, finally, such ceaseless dearing Upon her husband's patience wearing, Back to her sire's he sent his wife, To taste the sweets of country life; To dance at will the country jigs, And feed the turkeys, geese, and pigs. In course of time, he hoped his bride Might have her temper mollified; Which hope he duly put to test.

His wife recalled, said he, How went with you your rural rest,

From vexing cares and fashions free? Its peace and quiet did you gain, —
Its innocence without a stain?

Enough of all, said she; but then,
To see those idle, worthless men
Neglect the flocks, it gave me pain.
I told them, plainly, what I thought,
And thus their hatred quickly bought;
For which I do not care — not I.
Ah, madam, did her spouse reply,

If still your temper's so morose, And tongue so virulent, that those Who only see you morn and night Are quite grown weary of the sight, What, then, must be your servants' case, Who needs must see you, face to face,

Throughout the day?
And what must be the harder lot
Of him, I pray,

Whose days and nights
With you must be by marriage rights?
Return you to your father's cot.

If I recall you in my life,
Or even wish for such a wife,
Let Heaven, in my hereafter, send
Two such, to tease me, without end!





THE RAT RETIRED FROM THE WORLD.

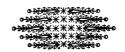
The sage Levantines have a tale About a rat that weary grew Of all the cares which life assail. And to a Holland cheese withdrew. His solitude was there profound, Extending through his world so round. Our hermit lived on that within: And soon his industry had been With claws and teeth so good, That, in his novel hermitage, He had in store, for wants of age, Both house and livelihood. What more could any rat desire? He grew fair, fat, and round. God's blessings thus redound To those who in His yows retire. One day this personage devout, Whose kindness none might doubt, Was asked, by certain delegates That came from Rat-United-States.



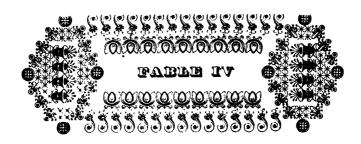
For some small aid, for they
To foreign parts were on their way,
For succor in the great cat-war.
Ratopolis beleaguered sore,

Their whole republic drained and poor, No morsel in their scrips they bore.

Slight boon they craved, of succor sure In days at utmost three or four. My friends, the hermit said, To worldly things I'm dead. How can a poor recluse To such a mission be of use? What can he do but pray That God will aid it on its way? And so, my friends, it is my prayer That God will have you in his care. His well-fed saintship said no more, But in their faces shut the door. What think you, reader, is the service For which I use this niggard rat? To paint a monk? No, but a dervise. A monk, I think, however fat,



Must be more bountiful than that.



THE HERON.

One day,—no matter when or where,— A long-legged heron chanced to fare By a certain river's brink, With his long, sharp beak Helved on his slender neck; — 'Twas a fish-spear, you might think. The water was clear and still, The carp and the pike there at will Pursued their silent fun, Turning up, ever and anon, A golden side to the sun. With case might the heron have made Great profits in his fishing trade. So near came the scaly fry, They might be caught by the passer-by. But he thought he better might Wait for a better appetite -For he lived by rule, and could not eat, Except at his hours, the best of meat. Anon his appetite returned once more; So, approaching again the shore,



and himmony, -- has lyndigh;

He saw some tench taking their leaps, Now and then, from their lowest deeps. With as dainty a taste as Horace's rat, He turned away from such food as that. What, tench for a heron! poh!

I scorn the thought, and let them go. The tench refused, there came a gudgeon; For all that, said the bird, I budge on. I'll ne'er open my beak, if the gods please, For such mean little fishes as these.

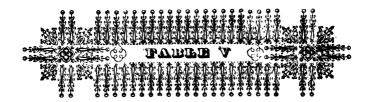
He did it for less: For it came to pass, That not another fish could be see; And, at last, so hungry was he, That he thought it of some avail To find on the bank a single snail.

Such is the sure result. Of being too difficult. Would you be strong and great, Learn to accommodate.

Get what you can, and trust for the rest; The whole is oft lost by seeking the best. Above all things, beware of disdain, Where, at most, you have little to gain. The people are many that make Every day this sad mistake. . 'Tis not for the herons I put this case, Ye featherless people, of the human race.

— List to another tale as true, And you'll hear the lesson brought home to you.

VOL. II.



THE MAID.

A CERTAIN maid, as proud as fair, A husband thought to find Exactly to her mind -Well-formed and young, genteel in air, Not cold nor jealous; - mark this well. Whoe'er would wed this dainty belle Must have, besides, rank, wealth, and wit, And all good qualities to fit — A man 'twere difficult to get. Kind Fate, however, took great care To grant, if possible, her prayer. There came a-wooing men of note; The maiden thought them all, By half, too mean and small. They marry me! the creatures dote: -Alas! poor souls! their case I pity. (Here mark the bearing of the beauty.) Some were less delicate than witty; Some had the nose too short or long; In others something else was wrong; Which made each in the maiden's eyes An altogether worthless prize.



La. Fillpille

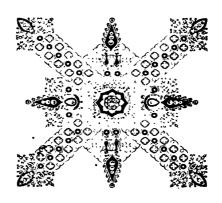
Profound contempt is aye the vice
Which springs from being over-nice.
Thus were the great dismissed; and then
Came offers from inferior men.
The maid, more scornful than before,
Took credit to her tender heart
For giving them an open door.

They think me much in haste to part
With independence! God be thanked,
My lonely nights bring no regret;
Nor shall I pine, or greatly fret,
Should I with ancient maids be ranked.
Such were the thoughts that pleased the fair:

Age made them only thoughts that were.

Adieu to lovers: — passing years Awaken doubts and chilling fears. Regret, at last, brings up the train. Day after day she sees, with pain, Some smile or charm take final flight, And leave the features of a "fright," Then came a hundred sorts of paint; But still no trick, nor ruse, nor feint, Availed to hide the cause of grief, Or bar out Time, that graceless thief. A house, when gone to wreck and ruin, May be repaired and made a new one. Alas! for ruins of the face No such rebuilding e'er takes place. Her daintiness now changed its tune; Her mirror told her, Marry soon;

So did a certain wish within,
With more of secrecy than sin, —
A wish that dwells with even prudes,
Annihilating solitudes.
This maiden's choice was past belief,
She soothing down her restless grief,
And smoothing it of every ripple.
By marrying a cripple.





SMILLER WOLF RAW



THE WISHES. ·

WITHIN the Great Mogul's domains there are Familiar sprites of much domestic use: They sweep the house, and take a tidy care Of equipage, nor garden work refuse; But, if you meddle with their toil, The whole, at once, you're sure to spoil. One, near the mighty Ganges' flood, The garden of a burgher good Worked noiselessly and well; To master, mistress, garden, bore A love that time and toil outwore. And bound him like a spell. Did friendly Zephyrs blow, The demon's pains to aid? (For so they do, 'tis said.) I own I do not know. But for himself he rested not, And richly blessed his master's lot. What marked his strength of love, He lived a fixture on the place, In spite of tendency to rove So natural to his race.

But brother sprites, conspiring
With importunity untiring,
So teased their goblin chief, that he,
Of his caprice or policy,
Our sprite commanded to attend
A house in Norway's farther end,
Whose roof was snow-clad through the year,
And sheltered human kind with deer.

Before departing, to his hosts
Thus spake this best of busy ghosts:—
To foreign parts I'm forced to go;
For what sad fault I do not know;—
But go I must; a month's delay,
Or week's, perhaps, and I'm away.
Seize time; three wishes make at will;
For three I'm able to fulfil—
No more. Quick at their easy task,
Abundance first these wishers ask—
Abundance, with her stores unlocked—
Barns, coffers, cellars, larder, stocked,—
Corn, cattle, wine, and money,—
The overflow of milk and honey.

But what to do with all this wealth!
What inventories, cares, and worry!
What wear of temper and of health!
Both lived in constant, slavish hurry.
Thieves took by plot, and lords by loan;
The king by tax, the poor by tone.

Thus felt the curses which Arise from being rich,—

Remove this affluence, they pray; The poor are happier than they Whose riches make them slaves. Gó, treasures, to the winds and waves; Come, goddess of the quiet breast, Who sweet'nest toil with rest, Dear Mediocrity, return! The prayer was granted, as we learn. Two wishes, thus expended, Had simply ended In bringing them exactly where, When they set out, they were. So, usually, it fares With those who waste in such vain prayers The time required by their affairs. The goblin laughed, and so did they. However, ere he went away, To profit by his offer kind, They asked for wisdom, wealth of mind, — A treasure void of care and sorrow -A treasure fearless of the morrow,



Let who will steal, or beg, or borrow.



THE LION'S COURT.

His lion majesty would know, one day,
What bestial tribes were subject to his sway.
He therefore gave his vassals, all,
By deputies, a call,
Despatching every where
A written circular,
Which bore his seal, and did import
His majesty would hold his court
A month most splendidly;
A feast would open his levee,
Which done, Sir Jocko's sleight
Would give the court delight.
By such sublime magnificence
The king would show his power immense.

Now were they gathered all
Within the royal hall—
And such a hall! The charnel scent
Would make the strongest nerves relent.
The bear put up his paw to close
The double access of his nose.
The act had better been omitted;
His throne at once the monarch quitted,
And sent to Pluto's court the bear,
To show his delicacy there.



The ape approved the cruel deed, A thorough flatterer by breed. He praised the prince's wrath and claws; He praised the odor and its cause. Judged by the fragrance of that cave, The amber of the Baltic wave, The rose, the pink, the hawthorn bank, Might with the vulgar garlic rank. The mark his flattery overshot, And made him share poor Bruin's lot, This lion playing, in his way, The part of Don Caligula. The fox approached. Now, said the king, Apply your nostrils to this thing, And let me hear, without disguise, The judgment of a beast so wise. The fox replied, Your majesty will please Excuse — and here he took good care to sneeze; — Afflicted with a dreadful cold, Your majesty need not be told My sense of smell is mostly gone. From danger thus withdrawn, He teaches us the while. That one, to gain the smile

Of kings, must hold the middle place 'Twixt blunt rebuke and fulsome praise; And sometimes use, with easy grace, The language of the Norman race.*

^{*} The Normans are proverbial among the French for the oracular non-committal of their responses. Un Normand, says the proverb, u son dit et son dédit.

VOL. II.



THE VULTURES AND THE PIGEONS.

Mars once made havoc in the air:
Some cause aroused a quarrel there
Among the birds;—not those that sing,
The courtiers of the merry Spring,
And by their talk, in leafy bowers,
Of loves they feel, enkindle ours;
Nor those which Cupid's mother yokes
To whirl on high her golden spokes;
But naughty hawk and vulture folks,
Of hookéd beak and talous keen.

The carcass of a dog, 'tis said,
Had to this civil carnage led.
Blood rained upon the swarded green,
And valiant deeds were done, I ween.
But time and breath would surely fail
To give the fight in full detail;
Suffice to say, that chiefs were slain,
And heroes strowed the sanguine plain,
Till old Prometheus, in his chains,
Began to hope an end of pains.
'Twas sport to see the battle rage,
And valiant hawk with hawk engage;



Twas pitiful to see them fall,—
Torn, bleeding, weltering, gasping, all.
Force, courage, cunning, all were plied;
Intrepid troops on either side
No effort spared to populate
The dusky realms of hungry Fate.
This woful strife awoke compassion
Within another feathered nation,

Of iris neck and tender heart.

They tried their hand at mediation —
To reconcile the foes, or part.

The pigeon people duly chose
Ambassadors, who worked so well

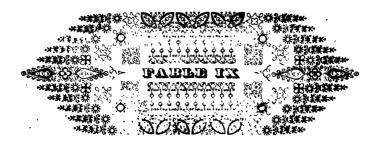
As soon the murderous rage to quell,
And staunch the source of countless woes.

A truce took place, and peace ensued.

Alas! the people dearly paid
Who such pacification made!
Those cursed hawks at once pursued
The harmless pigeons, slew and ate,
Till towns and fields were desolate.
Small prudence had the friends of peace
To pacify such foes as these!

The safety of the rest requires
The bad should flesh each other's spears:
Whoever peace with them desires
Had better set them by the ears.





THE COACH AND THE FLY.

Upon a sandy, uphill road, Which naked in the sunshine glowed, Six lusty horses drew a coach. Dames, monks, and invalids, its load, On foot, outside, at leisure trode. The team, all weary, stopped and blowed: Whereon there did a fly approach, And, with a vastly business air, Cheered up the horses with his buzz, — Now pricked them here, now pricked them there, As neatly as a jockey does, — And thought the while—he knew 'twas so— He made the team and carriage go, — On carriage-pole sometimes alighting — Or driver's nose—and biting. And when the whole did get in motion, Confirmed and settled in the notion. He took, himself, the total glory, — Flew back and forth in wondrous hurry,



And, as he buzzed about the cattle. Seemed like a sergeant in a battle, The files and squadrons leading on To where the victory is won. Thus charged with all the commonweal, This single fly began to feel Responsibility too great, And cares, a grievous, crushing weight; And made complaint that none would aid The horses up the tedious hill— The monk his prayers at leisure said — Fine time to pray! — the dames, at will, Were singing songs—not greatly needed! · Thus in their ears he sharply sang, And notes of indignation rang, — Notes, after all, not greatly heeded. Erelong the coach was on the top: Now, said the fly, my hearties, stop And breathe; — I've got you up the hill;— And, Messrs. Horses, let me say, I need not ask you if you, will A proper compensation pay.

Thus certain ever-bustling noddies
Are seen in every great affair; —
Important, swelling, busy-bodies,
And bores 'tis easier to bear
Than chase them from their needless care.



THE DAIRYWOMAN AND THE POT OF MILK.

A por of milk upon her cushioned crown, Good Peggy hastened to the market town; Short clad and light, with speed she went, Not fearing any accident;

Indeed, to be the nimbler tripper,
Her dress that day,
The truth to say,

Was simple petticoat and slipper.

And, thus bedight, Good Peggy, light,—

Her gains already counted, — Laid out the cash

At single dash,

Which to a hundred eggs amounted.

Three nests she made, Which, by the aid

Of diligence and care, were hatched.

To raise the chicks, I'll easy fix,

Said she, beside our cottage thatched.

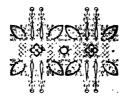
The fox must get More cunning yet,



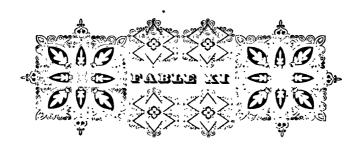
Or leave enough to buy a pig. With little care. And any fare, He'll grow quite fat and big; And then the price Will be so nice, For which the pork will sell! 'Twill go quite hard But in our yard I'll bring a cow and calf to dwell— A calf to frisk among the flock! The thought made Peggy do the same; And down at once the milk-pot came, And perished with the shock. Calf, cow, and pig, and chicks, adieu! Your mistress' face is sad to view; — She gives a tear to fortune spilt; Then, with the downcast look of guilt, Home to her husband empty goes, Somewhat in danger of his blows.

Who buildeth not, sometimes, in air, His cots, or seats, or castles fair? From kings to dairywomen, — all, — The wise, the foolish, great and small, — Each thinks his waking dream the best. Some flattering error fills the breast: The world, with all its wealth, is ours, Its honors, dames, and loveliest bowers.

Instinct with valor, when alone,
I hurl the monarch from his throne;
The people, glad to see him dead,
Elect me monarch in his stead,
And diadems rain on my head.
Some accident then calls me back,
And I'm no more than simple Jack!







THE CURATE AND THE CORPSE.

A DEAD man going slowly, sadly, To occupy his last abode, A curate by him, rather gladly, Did holy service on the road. Within a coach the dead was borne, A robe around him, duly worn, Of which, I wot, he was not proud — That ghostly garment called a shroud. In summer's blaze and winter's blast, That robe is changeless — 'tis the last. The curate, with his priestly dress on, Recited all the church's prayers, The psalm, the verse, response, and lesson, In fullest style of such affairs. Sir Corpse, we beg you, do not fear A lack of such things on your bier; They'll give abundance every way, Provided only that you pay. The Reverend John Cabbagepate. VOL. II.

Watched o'er the corpse, as if it were A treasure, needing guardian care; And all the while his looks, elate,

This language seemed to hold:—
The dead will pay so much in gold,
So much in lights of molten wax,
So much in other sorts of tax:

With all he hoped to buy a cask of wine, The best which thereabouts produced the vine.

A pretty niece, on whom he doted,
And eke his chambermaid, should be promoted,
By being newly petticoated.

The coach, upset and dashed to pieces,
Cut short these thoughts of wine and nieces!
There lay poor John, with broken head,
Beneath the coffin of the dead!
His rich parishioner in lead
Drew on the priest the doom
Of riding with him to the tomb!

The Pot of Milk, and fate Of Curate Cabbagepate, As emblems, do but give The history of most that live.







THE MAN WHO RAN AFTER FORTUNE, AND THE MAN WHO WAITED FOR HER ON HIS BED.

Wно joins not with his restless race To give Dame Fortune eager chase? O, had I but some lofty perch, From which to view the panting crowd Of care-worn dreamers, poor and proud, As on they hurry in the search, From realm to realm, o'er land and water, Of Fate's fantastic, fickle daughter! Ah! slaves sincere of flying phantom! Just as their goddess they would clasp, The jilt divine cludes their grasp, And flits away to Bantam! Poor fellows! I bewail their lot. And here's the comfort of my ditty; For fools the mark of wrath are not So much, I'm sure, as pity. That man, say they, and feed their hope, Raised cabbages — and now he's pope! Don't we deserve as rich a prize? Ay, richer? But hath Fortune eyes? And then the popedom, is it worth The price that must be given?— Repose? — the sweetest bliss of earth, And, ages since, of gods in heaven?

'Tis rarely Fortune's favorites
Enjoy this cream of all delights.
Seek not the dame, and she will you—
A truth which of her sex is true.

Snug in a country town A pair of friends were settled down. One sighed unceasingly to find A fortune better to his mind, And, as he chanced his friend to meet, Proposed to quit their dull retreat. No prophet can to honor come, Said he, unless he quits his home; Let's seek our fortune far and wide. Seek, if you please, his friend replied; For one, I do not wish to see A better clime or destiny. I leave the search and prize to you; Your restless humor please pursue; You'll soon come back again. I vow to nap it here till then. The enterprising, or ambitious, Or, if you please, the avaricious, Betook him to the road. The morrow brought him to a place The flaunting goddess ought to grace As her particular abode — I mean the court whereat he staid, And plans for seizing Fortune laid. He rose, and dressed, and dined, and went to bed, Exactly as the fashion led:

In short, he did whate'er he could, But never found the promised good. Said he, Now somewhere else I'll try— And yet I failed I know not why; For Fortune here is much at home; To this and that I see her come, Astonishingly kind to some. And, truly, it is hard to see The reason why she slips from me. 'Tis true, perhaps, as I've been told, That spirits here may be too bold. To courts and courtiers all I bid adieu: Deceitful shadows they pursue. The dame has temples in Surat; I'll go and see them — that is flat. To say so was t' embark at once. O, human hearts are made of bronze! His must have been of adamant, Beyond the power of Death to daunt, Who ventured first this route to try, And all its frightful risks defy. 'Twas more than once our venturous wight Did homeward turn his aching sight, When pirates, rocks, and calms, and storms, Presented death in frightful forms — · Death sought with pains on distant shores, Which, soon as wished for, would have come, Had he not left the peaceful doors Of his despised but blessed home. Arrived, at length, in Hindostan, The people told our wavward man

That Fortune, ever void of plan, Dispensed her favors in Japan. And on he went, the weary sea His vessel bearing lazily.

This lesson, taught by savage men,
Was after all his only gain:—
Contented in thy country stay,
And seek thy wealth in nature's way.
Japan refused to him, no less
Than Hindostan, success;
And hence his judgment came to make
His quitting home a great mistake.

Renouncing his ungrateful course, He hastened back with all his force; And when his village came in sight, His tears were proof of his delight. Ah, happy he, exclaimed the wight, Who, dwelling there with mind sedate, Employs himself to regulate His ever-hatching, wild desires; Who checks his heart when it aspires To know of courts, and seas, and glory, More than he can by simple story; Who seeks not o'er the treacherous wave — More treacherous Fortune's willing slave — The bait of wealth and honors fleeting, Held by that goddess, ave retreating. Henceforth from home I budge no more!

Pop on his sleeping friend's he came, Thus purposing against the dame, And found her sitting at his door.





THE TWO COCKS.

Two cocks in peace were living, when A war was kindled by a hen. O love, thou bane of Troy! 'twas thine The blood of men and gods to shed Enough to turn the Xanthus red As old Port wine! And long the battle doubtful stood; (I mean the battle of the cocks;) They gave each other fearful shocks: The fame spread o'er the neighborhood, And gathered all the crested brood. And Helens more than one, of plumage bright, Led off the victor of that bloody fight. The vanquished, drooping, fled, Concealed his battered head, And in a dark retreat Bewailed his sad defeat. His loss of glory and the prize His rival now enjoyed before his eyes.

While this he every day beheld,
His hatred kindled, courage swelled;
He whet his beak, and flapped his wings,
And meditated dreadful things.
Waste rage! His rival flew upon a roof
And crowed to give his victory proof.—

A hawk this boasting heard.

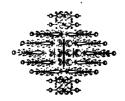
Now perished all his pride,
As suddenly he died
Beneath that savage bird.

In consequence of this reverse,
The vanquished sallied from his hole,
And took the harem, master sole,

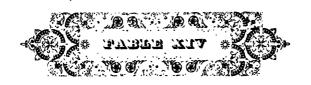
For moderate penance not the worse.

Imagine the congratulation, The proud and stately leading, Gallanting, coaxing, feeding, Of wives almost a nation.

'Tis thus that Fortune loves to flee
The insolent by victory.
We should mistrust her when we beat,
Lest triumph lead us to defeat.







THE INGRATITUDE AND INJUSTICE OF MEN TOWARDS FORTUNE.

A TRADER on the sea to riches grew;
Freight after freight the winds in favor blew;
Fate steered him clear; gulf, rock, nor shoal
Of all his bales exacted toll.

Of other men the powers of chance and storm Their dues collected in substantial form; While smiling Fortune, in her kindest sport, Took care to waft his vessels to their port. His partners, factors, agents, faithful proved;

His goods — tobacco, sugar, spice — Were sure to fetch the highest price.

By fashion and by folly loved,

His rich brocades and laces, And splendid porcelain vases, Enkindling strong desires,

Most readily found buyers.

In short, gold rained where'er he went — Abundance, more than could be spent — Dogs, horses, coaches, downy bedding — His very fasts were like a wedding.

A bosom friend, a look his table giving, Inquired whence came such sumptuous living. Whence should it come, said he, superb of brow, But from the fountain of my knowing how?

I owe it simply to my skill and care In risking only where the marts will bear. And now, so sweet his swelling profits were, He risked anew his former gains: Success rewarded not his pains — His own imprudence was the cause. One ship, ill-freighted, went awreck; Another felt of arms the lack, When pirates, trampling on the laws, O'ercame, and bore it off a prize; A third, arriving at its port, Had failed to sell its merchandise, — The style and folly of the court Not now requiring such a sort. His agents, factors, failed; — in short, The man himself, from pomp and princely cheer, And palaces, and parks, and dogs, and deer, Fell down to poverty most sad and drear. His friend, now meeting him in shabby plight, Exclaimed, And whence comes this to pass? From Fortune, said the man, alas! Console yourself, replied the friendly wight; For, if to make you rich the dame denies, She can't forbid you to be wise.

What faith he gained, I do not wis; I know, in every case like this, Each claims the credit of his bliss, And with a heart ingrate Imputes his misery to Fate.





THE FORTUNE-TELLERS.

'Trs oft from chance opinion takes its rise, And into reputation multiplies.

This prologue finds pat applications
In men of all this world's vocations;
For fashion, prejudice, and party strife,
Conspire to crowd poor justice out of life.

What can you do to counteract
This reckless, rushing cataract?
'Twill have its course for good or bad,
As it, indeed, has always had.
A dame in Paris played the Pythoness
With much of custom, and, of course, success.

Was any trifle lost, or did
Some maid a husband wish,
Or wife of husband to be rid,
Or either sex for fortune fish,
Resort was had to her with gold,
To get the hidden future told.
Her art was made of various tricks,
Wherein the dame contrived to mix,

With much assurance, learned terms. Now, chance, of course, sometimes confirms;

And just as often as it did,

The news was anything but hid. In short, though, as to ninety-nine per cent., The lady knew not what her answers meant,

Borne up by ever-babbling Fame,

An oracle she soon became.

A garret was this woman's home, Till she had gained of gold a sum

That raised the station of her spouse —

Bought him an office and a house.

As she could then no longer bear it, Another tenanted the garret.

To her came up the city crowd, —

Wives, maidens, servants, gentry proud, — To ask their fortunes, as before;

A Sibyl's cave was on her garret floor: Such custom had its former mistress drawn, It lasted even when herself was gone. It sorely taxed the present mistress' wits To satisfy the throngs of teasing cits.

I tell your fortunes! joke, indeed! Why, gentlemen, I cannot read! What can you, ladies, learn from me, Who never learned my A, B, C? Avaunt with reasons! tell she must, —

Predict as if she understood,

And lay aside more precious dust Than two the ablest lawvers could. The stuff that garnished out her room — Four crippled chairs, a broken broom — Helped mightily to raise her merits, — Full proof of intercourse with spirits! Had she predicted e'er so truly, On floor with carpet covered duly,

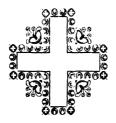
Her word had been a mockery made.

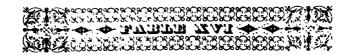
The fashion set upon the garret.

Doubt that! none bold enough to dare it!

The other woman lost her trade.

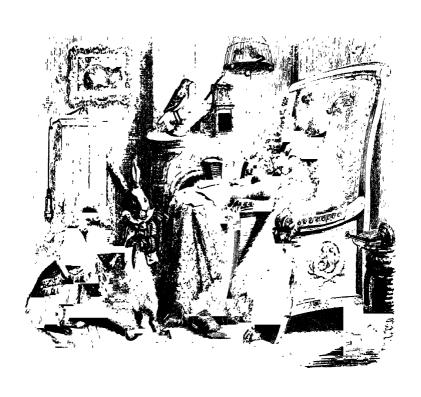
All shopmen know the force of signs,
And so, indeed, do some divines.
In palaces, a robe awry
Has sometimes set the wearer high;
And crowds his teaching will pursue
Who draws the greatest listening crew.
Ask, if you please, the reason why.





THE CAT, THE WEASEL, AND THE YOUNG RABBIT.

John Rabbit's palace under ground Was once by Goody Weasel found. She, sly of heart, resolved to seize The place, and did so at her ease. She took possession while its lord Was absent on the dewy sward, Intent upon his usual sport, A courtier at Aurora's court. When he had browsed his fill of clover. And cut his pranks all nicely over, Home Johnny came to take his drowse, All snug within his cellar-house. The weasel's nose he came to see, Outsticking through the open door. Ye gods of hospitality! Exclaimed the creature, vexéd sore, Must I give up my father's lodge? Ho! Madam Weasel, please to budge, Or, quicker than a weasel's dodge, I'll call the rats to pay their grudge! The sharp-nosed lady made reply, That she was first to occupy. The cause of war was surely small — A house where one could only crawl! And though it were a vast domain, Said she. I'd like to know what will



Could grant to John perpetual reign,—
The son of Peter or of Bill,—
More than to Paul, or even me.
John Rabbit spoke—great lawyer he—
Of custom, usage, as the law,

Whereby the house, from sire to son, As well as all its store of straw,

From Peter came at length to John.
Who could present a claim so good
As he, the first possessor, could?
Now, said the dame, let's drop dispute,
And go before Raminagrobis,
Who'll judge, not only in this suit,
But tell us truly whose the globe is.

This person was a hermit cat,

A cat that played the hypocrite, A saintly mouser, sleek and fat, An arbiter of keenest wit. John Rabbit in the judge concurred,

And off went both their case to broach Before his majesty, the furred.

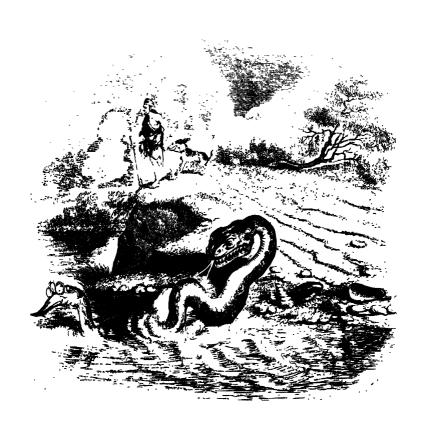
* Said Clapperclaw, My kits, approach, And put your noses to my ears; I'm deaf, almost, by weight of years. And so they did, not fearing aught.

The good apostle, Clapperclaw,
Then laid on each a well-armed paw,
And both to an agreement brought,
By virtue of his tuskéd jaw.
This brings to mind the fate
Of little kings before the great.



THE HEAD AND THE TAIL OF THE SERPENT.

Two parts the serpent has — Of men the enemies — The head and tail: the same Have won a mighty fame, Next to the cruel Fates; — So that, indeed, hence They once had great debates About precedence. The first had always gone ahead; The tail had been forever led; And now to Heaven it prayed, And said, O, many and many a league, Dragged on in sore fatigue, Behind his back I go. Shall be forever use me so? Am I his humble servant? No. Thanks to God most fervent! His brother I was born. And not his slave forlorn. The self-same blood in both,



I'm just as good as he:
A poison dwells in me
As virulent as doth *
In him. In mercy, heed
And grant me this decree,
That I in turn may lead —
My brother follow me.
My course shall be so wise
That no complaint shall rise.

With cruel kindness Heaven granted
The very thing he blindly wanted:
To such desires of beasts and men,
Though often deaf, it was not then.
At once this novel guide,
That saw no more in broad daylight
Than in the murk of darkest night,
His powers of leading tried,
Struck trees, and men, and stones, and bricks,
And led his brother straight to Styx.
And to the same unlovely home,
Some states by such an error come.

" An ancient mistake in natural history.





AN ANIMAL IN THE MOON.*

While one philosopher affirms. That by our senses we're deceived, Another swears, in plainest terms, The senses are to be believed. The twain are right. Philosophy · Correctly calls us dupes whene'er Upon mere senses we rely; But when we wisely rectify The raw report of eye or ear, By distance, medium, circumstance, In real knowledge we advance. These things hath nature wisely planned— Whereof the proof shall be at hand. I see the sun: its dazzling glow Seems but a hand-breadth here below; But should I see it in its home, That azure, star-besprinkled dome,

^{*} This fable is founded on a fact which occurred in the experience of the astronomer Sir Paul Neal, a member of the Royal Society of London.



Of all the universe the eye, Its blaze would fill one half the sky. The powers of trigonometry Have set my mind from blunder free. The ignorant believe it flat; I make it round, instead of that. I fasten, fix, on nothing ground it, And send the earth to travel round it In short, I contradict my eyes, And sift the truth from constant lies. The mind, not hasty at conclusion, Resists the onset of illusion. Forbids the sense to get the better, And ne'er believes it to the letter. Between my eyes, perhaps too ready, And ears as much or more too slow, A judge with balance true and steady, I come, at last, some things to know. Thus when the water crooks a stick, My reason straightens it as quick — Kind Mistress Reason — foe of error, And best of shields from needless terror. The creed is common with our race, The moon contains a woman's face. True? No. Whence, then, the notion, From mountain top to ocean?

Its hills and dales, of every grade, Effect a change of light and shade Deceptive to our feeble sight;

The roughness of that satellite,

So that, besides the human face, All sorts of creatures one might trace. Indeed, a living beast, I ween, Has lately been by England seen. All duly placed the telescope, And keen observers full of hope, An animal entirely new, In that fair planet, came to view. Abroad and fast the wonder flew; — Some change had taken place on high, Presaging earthly changes nigh; Perhaps, indeed, it might betoken The wars that had already broken Out wildly o'er the continent. The king to see the wonder went: (As patron of the sciences, No right to go more plain than his.) To him, in turn, distinct and clear, This lunar monster did appear. — A mouse, between the lenses caged, Had caused these wars, so fiercely waged! No doubt the happy English folks Laughed at it as the best of jokes. How soon will Mars afford the chance For like amusements here in France! He makes us reap broad fields of glory. Our foes may fear the battle-ground;

For us, it is no sooner found,
Than Louis, with fresh laurels crowned,
Bears higher up our country's story.

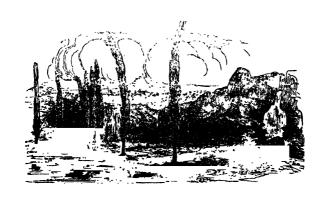
The daughters, too, of Memory,— The Pleasures and the Graces,— Still show their cheering faces: We wish for peace, but do not sigh. The English Charles the secret knows To make the most of his repose. And more than this, he'll know the way, By valor working sword in hand, To bring his sea-encircled land To share the fight it only sees to-day. Yet, could be but this quarrel quell, What incense-clouds would grateful swell! What deed more worthy of his fame!* Augustus, Julius — pray, which Cæsar's name Shines now on story's page with purest flame? O people happy in your sturdy hearts! .Say, when shall Peace pack up these bloody darts, And send us all, like you, to softer arts?

^{*} This fable appears to have been composed about the beginning of the year 1677. The European powers then found themselves exhausted by war, and desirous of peace. England, the only neutral, became, of course, the arbiter of the negotiations which ensued at Nimeguen. All the belligerent parties invoked her mediation. Charles II., however, felt himself exceedingly embarrassed by his secret connections with Louis XIV., which made him desire to prescribe conditions favorable to that monarch; while, on the other hand, he feared the people of England, if, treacherous to her interests, he should fail to favor the nations allied and combined against France.









PABLE FIRST.

DEATH AND THE DYING.



EATH never taketh by surprise

The well prepared, to wit, the wise—
They knowing of themselves the time
To meditate the final change of clime.
That time, alas! embraces all
Which into hours and minutes we divide;
There is no part, however small,
That from this tribute one can hide.

VOI. 11.

8

The very moment, oft, which bids

The heirs of empire see the light
Is that which shuts their fringéd lids

In everlasting night.

Defend yourself by rank and wealth,
Plead beauty, virtue, youth, and health,—

Unblushing Death will ravish all;
The world itself shall pass beneath his pall.

No truth is better known; but, truth to say,
No truth is oftener thrown away.

A man, well in his second century, Complained that Death had called him suddenly; Had left no time his plans to fill, To balance books, or make his will. O Death, said he, d'ye call it fair, Without a warning to prepare, To take a man on lifted leg? O, wait a little while, I beg. My wife cannot be left alone; I must set out my nephew's son; And let me build my house a wing, Before you strike, O cruel king! Old man, said Death, one thing is sure,— My visit here's not premature. Hast thou not lived a century? Dar'st thou engage to find for me, In Paris' walls, two older men? Has France, among her millions, ten? Thou say'st I should have sent thee word Thy lamp to trim, thy loins to gird;

And then my coming had been meet— Thy will engrossed,

Thy house complete!
Did not thy feelings notify?
Did not they tell thee thou must die?
Thy taste and hearing are no more;
Thy sight itself is gone before;
For thee the sun superfluous shines,
And all the wealth of Indian mines.
Thy mates I've shown thee dead or dying.
What's this, indeed, but notifying?
Come on, old man, without reply;

For to the great and common weal It doth but little signify

Whether thy will shall ever feel The impress of thy hand and seal.

And Death had reason, — ghastly sage!
For surely man, at such an age,
Should part from life as from a feast,
Returning decent thanks, at least,
To·Him who spread the various cheer,
And unrepining take his bier;
For shun it long no creature can.
Repinest thou, gray-headed man?
See younger mortals rushing by
To meet their death without a sigh —
Death full of triumph and of fame,
But in its terrors still the same. —
But, ah! my words are thrown away!
Those most like Death most dread his sway.



THE COBBLER AND THE FINANCIER.

A COBBLER sang from morn till night; 'Twas sweet and marvellous to hear. His trills and quavers told the ear Of more contentment and delight, Enjoyed by that laborious wight, Than e'er enjoyed the sages seven, Or any mortals short of heaven. His neighbor, on the other hand, With gold in plenty at command, But little sang, and slumbered less— A financier of great success. If e'er he dozed at break of day, The cobbler's song drove sleep away; And much he wished that Heaven had made Sleep a commodity of trade, In market sold, like food and drink, So much an hour, so much a wink. At last, our songster did he call To meet him in his princely hall. Said he, Now, honest Gregory, What may your yearly earnings be?



My yearly earnings! faith, good sir, I never go, at once, so far, The cheerful cobbler said. And queerly scratched his head, — I never reckon in that way, But cobble on from day to day, Content with daily bread. Indeed! Well, Gregory, pray, What may your earnings be per day? Why, sometimes more and sometimes less. The worst of all, I must confess, (And but for which our gains would be A pretty sight, indeed, to see,) Is that the days are made so many In which we cannot earn a penny— The sorest ill the poor man feels: They tread upon each other's heels, Those idle days of holy saints!

And though the year is shingled o'er,
The parson keeps a-finding more!
With smiles provoked by these complaints,
Replied the lordly financier,

l'il give you better cause to sing.
These hundred pounds I hand you here
Will make you happy as a king.
Go, spend them with a frugal heed;
They'll long supply your every need.
The cobbler thought the silver more
Than he had ever dreamed, before,
The mines for ages could produce,
Or world, with all its people, use.

He took it home, and there did hide,
And with it laid his joy aside.
No more of song, no more of sleep,
But cares, suspicions in their stead,
And false alarms, by fancy fed.
His eyes and ears their vigils keep,

And raise alarms, by rancy red.

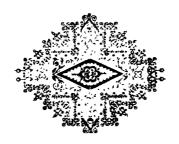
His eyes and ears their vigils keep,

And not a cat can tread the floor

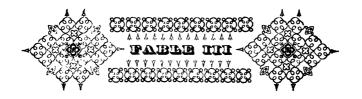
But seems a thief slipped through the door.

At last, poor man!

Up to the financier he ran,—
Then in his morning nap profound:
O, give me back my songs, cried he,
And sleep, that used so sweet to be,
And take the money, every pound!







THE LION, THE WOLF, AND THE FOX.

A LION, old and impotent with gout,
Would have some cure for age found out.
Impossibilities, on all occasions,
With kings, are rank abominations.
This king, from every species,—
For each abounds in every sort.—

For each abounds in every sort,—Called to his aid the leeches.

They came in throngs to court,
From doctors of the highest fee
To nostrum-quacks without degree,
Advised, prescribed, talked learnedly;

But with the rest Came not Sir Cunning Fox, M. D. Sir Wolf the royal couch attended,

And his suspicions there expressed. Forthwith his majesty, offended, Resolved Sir Cunning Fox should come, And sent to smoke him from his home. He came, was duly ushered in, And, knowing where Sir Wolf had been,

Said, Sire, your royal ear Has been abused, I fear,

By rumors false and insincere; To wit, that I've been self-exempt From coming here, through sheer contempt. But, sire, I've been on pilgrimage, By vow expressly made, Your royal health to aid, And, on my way, met doctors sage, In skill the wonder of the age, Whom carefully I did consult About that great debility Termed in the books senility, Of which you fear, with reason, the result. You lack, they say, the vital heat, By age extreme become effete. Drawn from a living wolf, the hide Should warm and smoking be applied. The secret's good, beyond a doubt, For nature's weak, and wearing out. Sir Wolf, here, won't refuse to give His hide to cure you, as I live. The king was pleased with this advice. Flayed, jointed, served up in a trice, Sir Wolf first wrapped the monarch up, Then furnished him whereon to sup.

Beware, ye courtiers, lest ye gain, By slander's arts, less power than pain; For in the world where ye are living, A pardon no one thinks of giving.



राज्यसम्बद्धाः अवस्त १०१० वर्गातावान



THE POWER OF FABLES.

TO M. DE BARILLON."

Can diplomatic dignity To simple fables condescend? Can I your famed benignity Invoke, my muse an ear to lend? If once she dares a high intent, Will you esteem her impudent? Your cares are weightier, indeed, Than listening to the sage debates Of rabbit or of weasel states: So, as it pleases, burn or read; But save us from the woful harms Of Europe roused in hostile arms. That from a thousand other places Our enemies should show their faces, May well be granted with a smile, But not that England's Isle Our friendly kings should set Their fatal blades to whet. Comes not the time for Louis to repose?

What Hercules, against these hydra foes,

^{*} Ambassador to the court of St. James.

Would not grow weary? Must new heads oppose
His ever-waxing energy of blows?
Now, if your gentle, soul-persuasive powers,
As sweet as mighty in this world of ours,
Can soften hearts, and lull this war to sleep,*
I'll pile your altars with a hundred sheep;

And this is not a small affair
For a Parnassian mountaineer.

Meantime, (if you have time to spare,)
Accept a little incense-cheer.

A homely, but an ardent prayer,
And tale in verse, I give you here.

I'll only say, the theme is fit for you.
With praise, which envy must confess
To worth like yours is justly due,
No man on earth needs propping less.

In Athens, once, that city fickle,
An orator,† awake to feel
His country in a dangerous pickle,
Would sway the proud republic's heart,
Discoursing of the common weal,
As taught by his tyrannic art.
The people listened—not a word.
Meanwhile the orator recurred
To bolder tropes—enough to*rouse
The dullest blocks that e'er did drowse;

^{*} The parliament of England was determined that, in case Louis XIV. did not make peace with the allies, Charles II. should join them to make war on France.

Demades.

He clothed in life the very dead, And thundered all that could be said.

The wind received his breath. As to the ear of death.

That beast of many heads and light, The crowd, accustomed to the sound.

Was all intent upon a sight -

A brace of lads in mimic fight.

A new resource the speaker found. Ceres, in lower tone said he, Went forth her harvest fields to see: An eel, as such a fish might be, And swallow, were her company. A river checked the travellers three. Two crossed it soon without ado; The smooth eel swam, the swallow flew. —

Outcried the crowd. With voices loud -

And Ceres — what did she? Why, what she pleased; but first Yourselves she justly cursed —

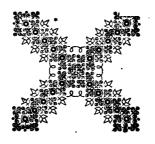
A people puzzling aye your brains With children's tales and children's play, While Greece puts on her steel array,

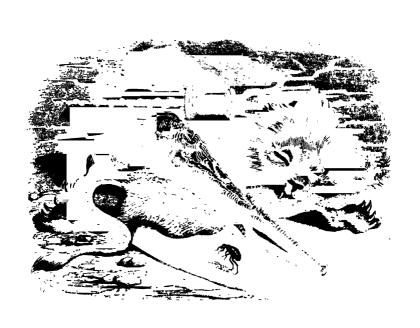
To save her limbs from tyrant chains! Why ask you not what Philip does? At this reproach the idle buzz

[&]quot; Horace, speaking of the Roman people, said, "Bellua multorum est capitum." — Epist. I. Book 1. 76.

Fell to the silence of the grave, Or moonstruck sea without a wave, And every eye and ear awoke To drink the words the patriot spoke. This feather stick in Fable's cap.

We're all Athenians, mayhap;
And I, for one, confess the sin;
For, while I write this moral here,
If one should tell that tale so queer
Ycleped, I think, "The Ass's Skin,"
I should not mind my work a pin.
The world is old, they say; I don't deny it;
But, infant still
In taste and will,
Whoe'er would teach, must gratify it.







THE MAN AND THE FLEA.

IMPERTINENT, we tease and weary Heaven
With prayers which would insult mere mortals even.
'Twould seem that not a god in all the skies
From our affairs must ever turn his eyes,
And that the smallest of our race
Could hardly eat, or wash his face,
Without, like Greece and Troy for ten years' space,
Embroiling all Olympus in the case.

A flea some blockhead's shoulder bit,
And then his clothes refused to quit.
O Hercules, he cried, you ought to purge
The world of this far worse than hydra scourge.
O Jupiter, what are your bolts about,
They do not put these foes of mine to rout?

To crush a flea, this fellow's fingers under, The gods must lend the fool their club and thunder.





THE WOMEN AND THE SECRET.

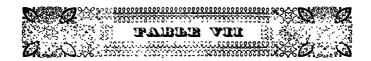
There's nothing like a secret weighs;
Too heavy 'tis for women tender;
And, for this matter, in my days,
I've seen some men of female gender.

To prove his wife, a husband cried,
(The night, he knew, the truth would hide,)
O Heavens! what's this? O dear — I beg —
I'm torn — O! O! I've laid an egg!
An egg? Why, yes, it's gospel-true.
Look here — see — feel it, fresh and new;
But, wife, don't mention it, lest men
Should laugh at me, and call me hen;
Indeed, don't say a word about it.
On this, as other matters, green and young,
The wife, all wonder, did not doubt it,
And pledged herself by Heaven to hold her tongue.
Her oath, however, fled the light
As quick as did the shades of night.



Before Dan Phœbus waked to labor, The dame was off to see a neighbor. My friend, she said, half whispering, There's come to pass the strangest thing-If you should tell, 'twould turn me out of door:— My husband's laid an egg as big as four! As you would taste of heaven's bliss, Don't tell a living soul of this. I tell! why, if you knew a thing about me, You wouldn't for an instant doubt me; Your confidence I'll ne'er abuse. The layer's wife went home relieved; The other broiled to tell the news; You need not ask if she believed. A dame more busy could not be; In twenty places, ere her tea, .Instead of one egg, she said three! Nor was the story finished here: A gossip, still more keen than she, Said four, and spoke it in the ear— A caution truly little worth, Applied to all the ears on earth. Of eggs the number, thanks to Fame, As on from mouth to mouth she sped, Had grown a hundred, soothly said, Ere Sol had quenched his golden flame!





THE DOG THAT CARRIED HIS MASTER'S DINNER.

Our eyes are not made proof against the fair,
Nor hands against the touch of gold.
Fidelity is sadly rare,
And has been from the days of old.

Well taught his appetite to check, And do full many a handy trick, A dog was trotting light and quick, His master's dinner on his neck. A temperate, self-denying dog was he, More than with such a load he liked to be. But still he was, while many such as we Would not have scrupled to make free. Strange that to dogs a virtue you may teach, Which, do your best, to men you vainly preach! This dog of ours, thus richly fitted out, A mastiff met, who wished the meat, no doubt. To get it was less easy than he thought: The porter laid it down, and fought. Meantime some other dogs arrive: — Such dogs are always thick enough,

And, fearing neither kick nor cuff, Upon the public thrive.

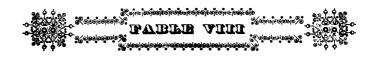


THE CHILLES SOME WHEN WE COME

Our hero, thus o'ermatched and pressed,—
The meat in danger manifest,—
Is fain to share it with the rest;
And, looking very calm and wise,
No anger, gentlemen, he cries:
My morsel will myself suffice;
The rest shall be your welcome prize.
With this, the first his charge to violate,
He snaps a mouthful from his freight.
Then follow mastiff, cur, and pup,
Till all is cleanly eaten up.
Not sparingly the party feasted,
And not a dog of all but tasted.

In some such manner men abuse
Of towns and states the revenues.
The sheriffs, aldermen, and mayor,
Come in for each a liberal share.
The strongest gives the rest example:
 "Tis sport to see with what a zest
 They sweep and lick the public chest
Of all its funds, however ample.
If any common weal's defender
 Should dare to say a single word,
 He's shown his scruples are absurd,
And finds it easy to surrender—
Perhaps, to be the first offender.





THE JOKER AND THE FISHES.

Some seek for jokers; I avoid.

A joke must be, to be enjoyed,
Of wisdom's words, by wit employed.
God never meant for men of sense,
The wits that joke to give offence.

Perchance of these I shall be able To show you one preserved in fable. A joker, at a banker's table, Most amply spread to satisfy The height of Epicurean wishes, Had nothing near but little fishes. So, taking several of the fry, He whispered to them very nigh, And seemed to listen for reply. The guests much wondered what it meant, And stared upon him all intent. The joker, then, with sober face, Politely thus explained the case: — A friend of mine, to India bound, Has been, I fear, Within a year, By rocks or tempests wrecked and drowned.

I asked these strangers from the sea To tell me where my friend might be.



But all replied they were too young To know the least of such a matter— The older fish could tell me better.

Pray, may I hear some older tongue?
What relish had the gentlefolks
For such a sample of his jokes,
Is more than I can now relate.
They put, I'm sure, upon his plate,
A monster of so old a date,
He must have known the names and fate
Of all the daring voyagers,
Who, following the moon and stars,
Have, by mischances, sunk their bones
Within the realms of Davy Jones;
And who, for centuries, had seen,
Far down within the fathomless,
Where whales themselves are sceptreless,
The ancients in their halls of green.





THE RAT AND THE OYSTER.

A COUNTRY rat, of little brains, Grown weary of inglorious rest, Left home, with all its straws and grains, Resolved to know beyond his nest. When peeping through the nearest fence, How big the world is! how immense! He cried; there rise the Alps, and that Is doubtless famous Ararat. His mountains were the works of moles, Or dirt thrown up in digging holes! Some days of travel brought him where The tide had left the oysters bare. Since here our traveller saw the sea. He thought these shells the ships must be. My father was, in truth, said he, A coward and an ignoramus; He dared not travel: as for me, I've seen the ships and ocean famous; Have crossed the deserts without drinking, And many dangerous streams, unshrinking; Such things I know from having seen and felt them.

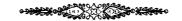
And, as he went, in tales he proudly dealt them,



Not being of those rats whose knowledge Comes by their teeth on books in college. Among the shut-up shell-fish, one Was gaping widely at the sun; It breathed, and drank the air's perfume, Expanding like a flower in bloom.

Both white and fat, its meat
Appeared a dainty treat.
Our rat, when he this shell espied,
Thought for his stomach to provide.
If not mistaken in the matter,
Said he, no meat was ever fatter,
Or in its flavor half so fine,
As that on which to-day I dine.
Thus full of hope, the foolish chap
Thrust in his head to taste,
And felt the pinching of a trap—
The oyster closed in haste.

We're first instructed, by this case,
That those to whom the world is new
Are-wonder-struck at every view;
And, in the second place,
That the marauder finds his match,
And he is caught who thinks to catch.



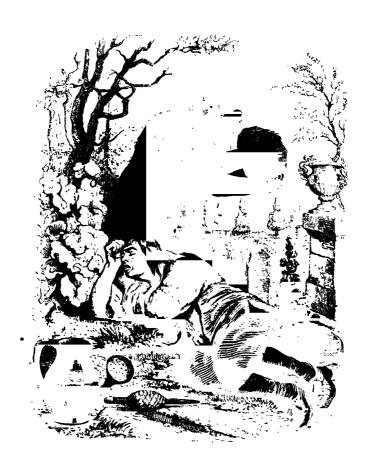


THE BEAR AND THE AMATEUR GARDENER.

A CERTAIN mountain bear, unlicked and rude, By fate confined within a lonely wood, — A new Bellerophon, whose life, Knew neither comrade, friend, nor wife, — Became insane; for reason, as we term it, Dwells never long with any hermit. 'Tis good to mix in good society, Obeying rules of due propriety; And better yet to be alone; But both are ills when overdone. No animal had business where All grimly dwelt our hermit bear; Hence, bearish as he was, he grew Heart-sick, and longed for something new. While he to sadness was addicted,

An aged man, not far from there, Was by the same disease afflicted.

A garden was his favorite care, —
Sweet Flora's priesthood, light and fair,
And eke Pomona's—ripe and red
The presents that her fingers shed.
These two employments, true, are sweet,
When made so by some friend discreet.



The gardens, gayly as they look, Talk not, (except in this my book;) So, tiring of the deaf and dumb, Our man one morning left his home Some company to seek, That had the power to speak. — The bear, with thoughts the same, Down from his mountain came: And in a solitary place, They met each other face to face. It would have made the boldest tremble; What did our man? To play the Gascon The safest seemed. He put the mask on, His fear contriving to dissemble. The bear, unused to compliment, Growled bluntly, but with good intent: -Come home with me. The man replied, Sir Bear, my lodgings, nearer by, In yonder garden, you may spy, Where, if you'll honor me the while, We'll break our fast in rural style. I've fruits and milk, —unworthy fare, It may be, for a wealthy bear; But then I offer what I have. The bear accepts with visage grave, But not unpleased; and, on their way, They grow familiar, friendly, gay. Arrived, you see them side by side,

As if their friendship had been tried.

To a companion so absurd, Blank solitude were well preferred; Yet, as the bear scarce spoke a word, The man was left quite at his leisure To trim his garden at his pleasure. Sir Bruin hunted — always brought His friend whatever game he caught; But chiefly aimed at driving flies — Those bold and shameless parasites, That vex us with their ceaseless bites— From off our gard'ner's face and eyes. One day, while, stretched upon the ground, The old man lay in sleep profound, A fly, that buzzed around his nose, — And bit it sometimes, I suppose, — Put Bruin sadly to his trumps. At last, determined, up he jumps: — I'll stop thy noisy buzzing now, Says he; I know precisely how. No sooner said than done. He seized a paving-stone; And by his modus operandi

A foolish friend may cause more woe Than could, indeed, the wisest foe.

Did both the fly and man die.





MIRE MINION. ADM. "



THE TWO FRIENDS.

Two friends, in Monomotapa,

Had all their interests combined.

Their friendship, faithful and refined,

Our country can't exceed, do what it may.

One night, when potent Sleep had laid

All still within our planet's shade,

One of the two gets up, alarmed,

Runs over to the other's palace,

And hastily the servants rallies.

His startled friend, quick armed,

With purse and sword his comrade meets,

And thus right kindly greets: —
Thou seldom com'st at such an hour;
I take thee for a man of sounder mind
Than to abuse the time for sleep designed.

Hast lost thy purse by Fortune's power? Here's mine. Hast suffered insult, or a blow? I've here my sword — to avenge it let us go.

No, said his friend, no need I feel Of either silver, gold, or steel; I thank thee for thy friendly zeal. In sleep I saw thee rather sad,
And thought the truth might be as bad;
Unable to endure my fear,
That cursed dream has brought me here.

Which think you, reader, loved the most? If doubtful this, one truth may be proposed. There's nothing sweeter than a real friend:

Not only is he prompt to lend—
An angler delicate, he fishes
The very deepest of your wishes,
And spares your modesty the task
His friendly aid to ask.
A dream, a shadow, wakes his fear,
When pointing at the object dear.







THE HOG, THE GOAT, AND THE SHEEP.

A GOAT, a sheep, and porker fat,
All to the market rode together.
Their own amusement was not that
Which caused their journey thither.
Their coachman did not mean to "set them down"
To see the shows and wonders of the town.

The porker cried, in piereing squeals,
As if with butchers at his heels.
The other beasts, of milder mood,
The cause by no means understood.
They saw no harm, and wondered why
At such a rate the hog should cry.
Hush there, old piggy, said the man,
And keep as quiet as you can.
What wrong have you to squeal about,
And raise this devilish, deafening shout?
These stiller persons at your side
Have manners much more dignified.

Pray, have you heard
A single word
Come from that gentleman in wool?
That proves him wise. It proves him fool,

The testy hog replied;
For did he know
To what we go,
He'd cry almost to split his throat;
So would her ladyship the goat.
They only think to lose with ease,
The goat her milk, the sheep his fleece:
They're, may be, right; but as for me,
This ride is quite another matter.
Of service only on the platter,
My death is quite a certainty.
Adieu, my dear old piggery!
The porker's logic proved at once
Himself a prophet and a dunce.

Hope ever gives a present ease,
But fear beforehand kills:
The wisest he who least foresees
Inevitable ills.







THYRSIS AND AMARANTH.

FOR MADEMOISELLE DE SILLERY.

I had the Phrygian quit, Charmed with Italian wit;* But a divinity Would on Parnassus see A fable more from me. Such challenge to refuse, Without a good excuse, Is not the way to use Divinity or muse.

Especially to one f those who truly are, y force of being fair, lade queens of human will,

A thing should not be done In all respects so ill. For, be it known to all, From Sillery the call Has come for bird, and beast, And insects, to the least,

^{*} Referring to his Tales, in which he had borrowed many subjects from Boccaccio.

To clothe their thoughts sublime
In this my simple rhyme.
In saying Sillery,
All's said that need to be.
Her claim to it so good,
Few fail to give her place
Above the human race:
How could they, if they would?

Now come we to our end:

As she opines, my tales
Are hard to comprehend;
For even genius fails
Some things to understand;
So let us take in hand
To make unnecessary,
For once, a commentary.

Come shepherds now,—and rhyme we afterwards The talk between the wolves and fleecy herds.

To Amaranth, the young and fair,
Said Thyrsis, once, with serious air,—
O, if you knew, like me, a certain ill
With which we men are harmed,
As well as strangely charmed,
No boon from Heaven your heart could like it fill!
Please let me name it in your ear,—
A harmless word,—you need not fear.
Would I deceive you? you, for whom I bear
The tenderest sentiments that ever were?

Then Amaranth replied,

What is its name? I beg you, do not hide.

Tis LOVE. — The word is beautiful; reveal

Its signs and symptoms, how it makes one feel. -

Its pains are ecstasies. So sweet its stings, The nectar-cups and incense-pots of kings,

Compared, are flat, insipid things.

One strays all lonely in the wood— Leans silent o'er the placid flood,

And there, with great complacency,

A certain face can see —

'Tis not one's own — but image fair,

Retreating,

Fleeting,

Meeting,

Greeting,

Following every where.

For all the rest of human kind.

One is as good, in short, as blind.

There is a shepherd wight, I ween,

Well known upon the village green,

Whose voice, whose name, whose turning of the hinge

Excites upon the cheek a richer tinge -

The thought of whom is signal for a sigh —

The breast that heaves it knows not why —

Whose face the maiden fears to see,

Yet none so welcome still as he. -

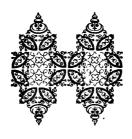
Here Amaranth cut short his speech:

O! O! is that the evil which you preach?

To me, I think, it is no stranger; I must have felt its power and danger. Here Thyrsis thought his end was gained, When further, thus, the maid explained:

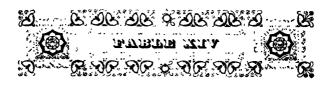
'Tis just the very sentiment
Which I have felt for Clidamant!
The other, vexed and mortified,
Now bit his lips, and nearly died.

Like him are multitudes, who, when Their own advancement they have meant, Have played the game of other men.





which outgoing the tipe that the outgoing is



THE FUNERAL OF THE LIONESS.

THE lion's consort died: Crowds, gathered at his side, Must needs console the prince, And thus their loyalty evince By compliments of course, Which make affliction worse, Officially he cites His realm to funeral rites, At such a time and place; His marshals of the mace Would order the affair. Judge you if all came there. Meantime, the prince gave way To sorrow, night and day. With cries of wild lament His cave he well nigh rent. And from his courtiers, far and near, Sounds imitative you might hear.

The court a country seems to me,
Whose people are no matter what,—
Sad, gay, indifferent, or not,—
As suits the will of majesty;
Or, if unable so to be,
vol. 11.

Their task it is to seem it all—
Chameleons, monkeys, great and small.
'Twould seem one spirit serves a thousand bodiesA paradise, indeed, for soulless noddies.

But to our tale again: The stag graced not the funeral train; Of tears his cheeks bore not a stain; For how could such a thing have been, When death avenged him on the queen, Who, not content with taking one, Had choked to death his wife and son? The tears, in truth, refused to run. A flatterer, who watched the while, Affirmed that he had seen him smile. If, as the wise man somewhere saith, A king's is like a lion's wrath, What should King Lion's be but death? The stag, however, could not read; Hence paid this proverb little heed, And walked, intrepid, towards the throne; When thus the king, in fearful tone:--

Thou caitiff of the wood!

Presum'st to laugh at such a time?

Joins not thy voice the mournful chime?

We suffer not the blood Of such a wretch profane Our sacred claws to stain. Wolves, let a sacrifice be made, Avenge your mistress' awful shade. Sire, did the stag reply,
The time for tears is quite gone by;
For in the flowers, not far from here,
Your worthy consort did appear;
Her form, in spite of my surprise,
I could not fail to recognize.

My friend, said she, beware
Lest funeral pomp about my bier,
When I shall go with gods to share,
Compel thine eye to drop a tear.

With kindred saints I rove
In the Elysian grove,
And taste a sort of bliss
Unknown in worlds like this.
Still, let the royal sorrow flow

Its proper season here below;

'Tis not unpleasing, I confess.

The king and court scarce hear him out.

Up goes the loud and welcome shout —

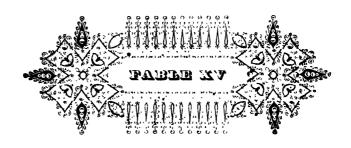
A miracle! an apotheosis!

And such at once the fashion is.

So far from dying in a ditch,

The stag retires with presents rich.

Amuse the ear of royalty
With pleasant dreams and flattery,—
No matter what you may have done,
Nor yet how high its wrath may run,—
The bait is swallowed—object won.



THE RAT AND THE ELEPHANT.

One's own importance to enhance,
Inspirited by self-esteem,
Is quite a common thing in France;

A French disease it well might seem. The strutting cavaliers of Spain Are in another manner vain. Their pride has more insanity, More silliness our vanity.

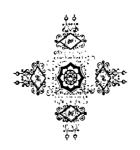
Let's shadow forth our own disease — Well worth a hundred tales like these.

A rat, of quite the smallest size,
Fixed on an elephant his eyes,
And jeered the beast of high descent
Because his feet so slowly went.
Upon his back, three stories high,
There sat, beneath a canopy,
A certain sultan of renown,
His dog, and cat, and concubine,
His parrot, servant, and his wine,
All pilgrims to a distant town.



THE LANGE TO BE TO

The rat professed to be amazed That all the people stood and gazed With wonder, as he passed the road, Both at the creature and his load. As if, said he, to occupy A little more of land or sky Made one, in view of common sense, Of greater worth and consequence! What see ye, men, in this parade, That food for wonder need be made? The bulk which makes a child afraid? In truth, I take myself to be, In all respects, as good as he. And further might have gone his vaunt; But, darting down, the cat Convinced him that a rat Is smaller than an elephant.





THE HOROSCOPE.

On death we mortals often run, Just by the roads we take to shun.

A father's only heir, a son, Was over-loved and doted on So greatly, that astrology Was questioned what his fate might be. The man of stars this caution gave — That, until twenty years of age, No lion, even in a cage, The boy should see, — his life to save. The sire, to silence every fear About a life so very dear, Forbade that any one should let His son beyond his threshold get. Within his palace walls, the boy Might all that heart could wish enjoy— Might with his mates walk, leap, and run, And frolic in the wildest fun. When come of age to love the chase. That exercise was oft depicted To him as one that brought disgrace, To which but blackguards were addicted.





But neither warning nor derision Could change his ardent disposition. The youth, fierce, restless, full of blood, Was prompted by the boiling flood To love the dangers of the wood. The more opposed, the stronger grew His mad desire. The cause he knew For which he was so closely pent;

And as, where'er he went,
In that magnificent abode,
Both tapestry and canvass showed
The feats he did so much admire,
A painted lion roused his ire.
Ah, monster! cried he, in his rage,
'Tis you that keep me in my cage.

With that, he clinched his fist,
To strike the harmless beast—
And did his hand empale
Upon a hidden nail!

And thus this cherished head, For which the healing art But vainly did its part,

Was hurried to the dead By caution blindly meant To shun that sad event.

The poet Æschylus, 'tis said, By much the same precaution bled.

A conjurer foretold

A house would crush him in its fall; —

Forth sallied he, though old,
From town and roof-protected hall,
And took his lodgings, wet or dry,
Abroad, beneath the open sky.
An eagle, bearing through the air
A tortoise for her household fare,
Which first she wished to break,
The creature dropped, by sad mistake,
Plump on the poet's forchead bare,
As if it were a naked rock—
To Æschylus a fatal shock!

From these examples, it appears, This art, if true in any wise, Makes men fulfil the very fears Engendered by its prophecies. But from this charge I justify, By branding it a total lie. I don't believe that Nature's powers Have tied her hands, or pinioned ours, By marking on the heavenly vault Our fate, without mistake or fault. That fate depends upon conjunctions Of places, persons, times, and tracks, And not upon the functions Of more or less of quacks. A king and clown beneath one planet's nod Are born; one wields a sceptre, one a hod. But it is Jupiter that wills it so!

And who is he? A soulless clod.

How can he cause such different powers to flow
Upon the aforesaid mortals here below?
And how, indeed, to this far distant ball
Can he impart his energy at all?—
How pierce the ether deeps profound,
The sun, and globes that whirl around?
A mote might turn his potent ray
Forever from its earthward way.
Will find it, then, in starry cope,
The makers of the horoscope?

The war with which all Europe's now afflicted — Deserves it not by them to've been predicted?

Yet heard we not a whisper of it,
Before it came, from any prophet.
The suddenness of passion's gush,
Of wayward life the headlong rush,—
Permit they that the feeble ray
Of twinkling planet, far away,
Should trace our winding, zigzag course?
And yet this planetary force,

As steady as it is unknown,

These fools would make our guide alone — Of all our varied life the source!

Such doubtful facts as I relate —
The petted child's and poet's fate —
Our argument may well admit.

The blindest man that lives in France
The smallest mark would doubtless hit—
Once in a thousand times—by chance.



THE ASS AND THE DOG.

Dame Nature, our respected mother, Ordains that we should aid each other.

The ass this ordinance neglected,
Though not a creature ill-affected.
Along the road a dog and he
One master followed silently.
Their master slept: meanwhile, the ass
Applied his nippers to the grass,
Much pleased in such a place to stop,
Though there no thistle he could crop.
He would not be too delicate,
Nor spoil a dinner for a plate,
Which, but for that, his favorite dish,
Were all that any ass could wish.

My dear companion, Towser said, —
'Tis as a starving dog I ask it, —
Pray lower down your loaded basket,
And let me get a piece of bread.



No answer — not a word! — indeed,
The truth was, our Arcadian steed
Feared lest, for every moment's flight,
His nimble teeth should lose a bite.
At last, I counsel you, said he, to wait
Till master is himself awake,

Who then, unless I much mistake,
Will give his dog the usual bait.
Meanwhile, there issued from the wood
A creature of the wolfish brood,
Himself by famine sorely pinched.
At sight of him, the donkey flinched,
And begged the dog to give him aid.
The dog budged not, but answer made,—
I counsel thee, my friend, to run,

• Till master's nap is fairly done;
There can, indeed, be no mistake,
That he will very soon awake;
Till then, scud off with all your might;
And should he snap you, in your flight,
This ugly wolf—why, let him feel
The greeting of your well-shod heel.
I do not doubt, at all, but that
Will be enough to lay him flat.

But ere he ceased, it was too late; The ass had met his cruel fate.

Thus selfishness we reprobate.

THE PASHAW AND THE MERCHANT.

A TRADING Greek, for want of law, Protection bought of a pashaw; And like a nobleman he paid, Much rather than a man of trade — Protection being, Turkish-wise, A costly sort of merchandise. So costly was it, in this case, The Greek complained, with tongue and face. Three other Turks, of lower rank, Would guard his substance as their own, And all draw less upon his bank, Than did the great pashaw alone. The Greek their offer gladly heard, And closed the bargain with a word. The said pashaw was made aware, And counseled, with a prudent care, These rivals to anticipate, By sending them to heaven's gate, As messengers to Mahomet --Which measure should he much delay, Himself might go the self-same way, By poison offered secretly, Sent on, before his time, to be



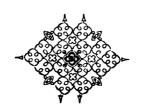
Protector to such arts and trades As flourish in the world of shades. On this advice, the Turk — no gander — Behaved himself like Alexander.* Straight to the merchant's, firm and stable, He went, and took a seat at table. Such calm assurance there was seen. Both in his words and in his mien, That e'en that weasel-sighted Grecian Could not suspect him of suspicion. My friend, said he, I know you've quit me, And some think caution would befit me, Lest to despatch me be your plan: But, deeming you too good a man To injure either friends or foes With poisoned cups or secret blows, I drown the thought, and say no more. But, as regards the three or four Who take my place, I crave your grace To listen to an apologue.

A shepherd, with a single dog,
Was asked the reason why
He kept a dog, whose least supply
Amounted to a loaf of bread
For every day. The people said

^{*} Who took the medicine presented to him by his physician Philip, the moment after he had received a letter announcing that that very man designed to poison him. — ARRIAN, L. II. Chap. XIV.

He'd better give the animal To guard the village seignior's hall: For him, a shepherd, it would be A thriftier economy To keep small curs, say two or three, That would not cost him half the food, And yet for watching be as good. The fools, perhaps, forgot to tell If they would fight the wolf as well. The silly shepherd, giving heed, Cast off his dog of mastiff breed, And took three dogs to watch his cattle, Which are far less, but fled in battle. His flock such counsel lived to rue. As, doubtlessly, my friend, will you. If wise, my aid again you'll seek — And so, persuaded, did the Greek.

Not vain our tale, if it convinces
Small states that 'tis a wiser thing
To trust a single powerful king,
Than half a dozen petty princes.







THE USE OF KNOWLEDGE.

Between two citizens A controversy grew.

The one was poor, but much he knew:
The other, rich, with little sense,
Claimed that, in point of excellence,
The merely wise should bow the knee
To all such moneyed men as he.
The merely fools, he should have said;
For why should wealth hold up its head,
When merit from its side hath fled?

My friend, quoth Bloated-purse To his reverse,

You think yourself considerable.
Pray, tell me, do you keep a table?
What comes of this incessant reading,
In point of lodging, clothing, feeding?
It gives one, true, the highest chamber,
One coat for June and for December,
His shadow for his sole attendant,
And hunger always in th' ascendant.

What profits he his country, too, Who scarcely ever spends a sou? Will, haply, be a public charge? Who profits more the state at large, Than he whose luxuries dispense
Among the people wealth immense?
We set the streams of life a flowing;
We set all sorts of trades a going.
The spinner, weaver, sewer, vender,
And many a wearer, fair and tender,
All live and flourish on the spender—
As do, indeed, the reverend rooks,
Who waste their time in making books.

These words, so full of impudence,
Received their proper recompense.
The man of letters held his peace,
Though much he might have said with ease.
A war avenged him soon and well;
In it their common city fell.
Both fled abroad; the ignorant,
By fortune thus brought down to want,
Was treated every where with scorn,
And roamed about, a wretch forlorn;
Whereas the scholar, every where,
Was nourished by the public care.

Let fools the studious despise; There's nothing lost by being wise.



Than he whose luxuries dispense
Among the people wealth immense?
We set the streams of life a flowing;
We set all sorts of trades a going.
The spinner, weaver, sewer, vender,
And many a wearer, fair and tender,
All live and flourish on the spender—
As do, indeed, the reverend rooks,
Who waste their time in making books.

These words, so full of impudence,
Received their proper recompense.
The man of letters held his peace,
Though much he might have said with ease.
A war avenged him soon and well;
In it their common city fell.
Both fled abroad; the ignorant,
By fortune thus brought down to want,
Was treated every where with scorn,
And roamed about, a wretch forlorn;
Whereas the scholar, every where,
Was nourished by the public care.

Let fools the studious despise; There's nothing lost by being wise.





ा प्राथित हुए सहित एक प्राथित है।



JUPITER AND THE THUNDERBOLTS.

Said Jupiter, one day,
As on a cloud he lay,
Observing all our crimes,
Come, let us change the times,
By leasing out anew
A world whose wicked crew
Have wearied out our grace,
And cursed us to our face.
Hie hellward, Mercury;
A Fury bring to me,
The direst of the three.
Race nursed too tenderly!
This day your doom shall be.
E'en while he spoke their fate,
His wrath began to moderate.

O kings, with whom his will Hath lodged our good and ill, Your wrath and storm between One night should intervene.

· vol. 11. 1

The god of rapid wing And lip unfaltering To sunless regions sped, And met the sisters dread. To grim Tisiphone And pale Megæra, he Preferred, as murderess, Alecto, pitiless.

This choice so roused the fiend, By Pluto's beard she swore The human race no more Should be by handfuls gleaned, But in one solid mass Th' infernal gates should pass. But Jove, displeased with both The Fury and her oath, Despatched her back to hell. And then a bolt he hurled, Down on a faithless world, Which in a desert fell.

Aimed by a father's arm, It caused more fear than harm. (All fathers strike aside.) What did from this betide? Our evil race grew bold,

Resumed their wicked tricks, Increased them manifold. Till, all Olympus through, Indignant murmurs flew.

When, swearing by the Styx,

The sire that rules the air Storms promised to prepare More terrible and dark, Which should not miss their mark. A father's wrath it is! The other deities All in one voice exclaimed; And, might the thing be named, Some other god would make Bolts better for our sake. This Vulcan undertook. His rumbling forges shook And glowed with fervent heat, While Cyclops blew and beat. Forth from the plastic flame Two sorts of bolts there came Of these, one misses not: 'Tis by Olympus shot, — That is, the gods at large. The other, bearing wide, Hits mountain-top or side, Or makes a cloud its targe. And this it is alone Which leaves the father's throne.





THE FALCON AND THE CAPON.

You often hear a sweet, seductive call:

If wise, you hasten towards it not at all,—

And, if you heed my apologue,

You act like John de Nivelle's dog.*

A capon, citizen of Mans,
Was summoned from a throng
To answer to the village squire,
Before tribunal called the fire.
The matter to disguise,
The kitchen sheriff wise
Cried, Biddy — Biddy — Biddy! —
But not a moment did he —
This Norman and a half! —
The smooth official trust.
Your bait, said he, is dust, —
And I'm too old for chaff.

^{*} A dog which, according to the French proverb, ran away when his master called him.

[†] Though the Normans are proverbial for their shrewdness, the French have, nevertheless, a proverb that they come to Paris to be hanged. Hence La Fontaine makes his capon, who knew how to shun a similar fate, le Normand et demi—the Norman and a half.



Meantime, a falcon, on his perch,
Observed the flight and search.
In man, by instinct or experience,
The capons have so little confidence,
That this was not without much trouble caught,
Though for a splendid supper sought.

To lie, the morrow night,
In brilliant candle light,
Supinely on a dish
Midst viands, fowl, and fish,
With all the ease that heart could wish—
This honor, from his master kind,
The fowl would gladly have declined.

Outcried the bird of chase,

As in the weeds he eyed the skulker's face,—
Why, what a stupid, blockhead race!—

Such witless, brainless fools
Might well defy the schools.
For me, I understand

To chase at word
The swiftest bird,
Aloft, o'er sea or land;
At slightest beck,
Returning quick

To perch upon my master's hand.

There, at his window he appears—
He waits thee—hasten—hast no ears?

Ah! that I have, the fowl replied;

But what from master might betide?

Or cook, with cleaver at his side?

Return you may for such a call,
But let me fly their fatal hall;
And spare your mirth at my expense:
Whate'er I lack, 'tis not the sense
To know that all this sweet-toned breath
Is spent to lure me to my death.
If you had seen upon the spit

As I have of the capon host,
You would not thus reproach my wit.





अपने १६ अस्त वर्षा



THE CAT AND THE RAT.

Four creatures, wont to prowl,—
Sly Grab-and-Snatch, the cat,
Grave Evil-bode, the owl,
Thief Nibble-stitch, the rat,
And Madam Weasel, prim and fine,—
Inhabited a rotten pine.
A man their home discovered there,
And set, one night, a cunning snare.

The cat, a noted early-riser,
Went forth, at break of day,
To hunt her usual prey.
Not much the wiser
For morning's feeble ray,
The noose did suddenly surprise her.
Waked by her strangling cry,
Gray Nibble-stitch drew nigh:
As full of joy was he
As of despair was she,
For in the noose he saw
His foe of mortal paw.

Dear friend, said Mrs. Grab-and-Snatch, Do, pray, this cursed cord detach.

I've always known your skill,
And often your good will;
Now help me from this worst of snares,
In which I fell at unawares.

'Tis by a sacred right,
You, sole of all your race,
By special love and grace,
Have been my favorite—
The darling of my eyes.

'Twas ordered by celestial cares,

No doubt; I thank the blessed skies,
That, going out to say my prayers,
As cats devout each morning do,
This net has made me pray to you.
Come, fall to work upon the cord.

Replied the rat, And what reward
Shall pay me, if I dare?
Why, said the cat, I swear
To be your firm ally:
Henceforth, eternally,
These powerful claws are yours,
Which safe your life insures.

I'll guard from quadruped and fowl; I'll eat the weasel and the owl.

Ah, cried the rat, you fool!

I'm quite too wise to be your tool.

He said, and sought his snug retreat,

Close at the rotten pine-tree's feet,

Where plump he did the weasel meet;

Whom shunning by a happy dodge,

He climbed the hollow trunk to lodge;

And there the savage owl he saw.

Necessity became his law,
And down he went, the rope to gnaw.

Strand after strand in two he bit,
And freed, at last, the hypocrite.

That moment came the man in sight;
The new allies took hasty flight.

A good while after that,
Our liberated cat
Espied her favorite rat,
Quite out of reach, and on his guard.
My friend, said she, I take your shyness hard,

Your caution wrongs my gratitude;
Approach, and greet your stanch ally.

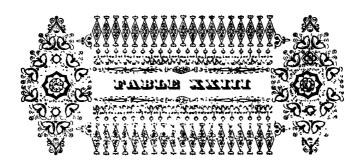
Do you suppose, dear rat, that I Forget the solemn oath I mewed? Do I forget, the rat replied, To what your nature is allied?

To thankfulness, or even pity, Can cats be ever bound by treaty?

Alliance from necessity

Is safe just while it has to be.





THE TORRENT AND THE RIVER.

With mighty rush and roar,
Adown a mountain steep
A torrent tumbled, — swelling o'er
Its rugged banks, — and bore
Vast ruin in its sweep.

The traveller were surely rash
To brave its whirling, foaming dash.
But one, by robbers sorely pressed,
Its terrors haply put to test.
They were but threats of foam and sound,
The loudest where the least profound:
With courage from his safe success,
His foes continuing to press,

He met a river in his course:
On stole its waters, calm and deep,
So silently they seemed asleep,
All sweetly cradled, as I ween,
In sloping banks, and gravel clean,
They threatened neither man nor horse.





Both ventured; but the noble steed,
That saved from robbers by his speed,
From that deep water could not save;
Both went to drink the Stygian wave;
Both went to cross, (but not to swim,)
Where reigns a monarch stern and grim,
Far other streams than ours.

Still men are men of dangerous powers; Elsewhere, 'tis only ignorance that cowers.





EDUCATION.

Lapluck and Cæsar brothers were, descended From dogs by Fame the most commended, Who falling, in their puppyhood, To different masters anciently, One dwelt and hunted in the boundless wood; From thieves the other kept a kitchen free. At first, each had another name; But, by their bringing up, it came, While one improved upon his nature, The other grew a sordid creature, Till, by some scullion called Lapluck, The name ungracious ever stuck. To high exploits his brother grew, Put many a stag at bay, and tore Full many a trophy from the boar; In short, him first, of all his crew. The world as Cæsar knew; And care was had, lest, by a baser mate, His noble blood should e'er degenerate.



Not so with his neglected brother;
He made whatever came a mother;
And, by the laws of population,
His race became a countless nation—
The common turnspits throughout France:
Where danger is, they don't advance:—
Precisely the antipodes
Of what we call the Cæsars, these!

Oft falls the son below his sire's estate; Through want of care all things degenerate. For lack of nursing Nature and her gifts, What crowds from gods become mere kitchen thrifts!





THE TWO DOGS AND THE DEAD ASS.

THE Virtues should be sisters, hand in hand, Since banded brothers all the Vices stand: When one of these our hearts attacks. All come in file; there only lacks, From out the cluster, here and there, A mate of some antagonizing pair, That can't agree the common roof to share. But all the Virtues, as a sisterhood, Have scarcely ever in one subject stood. We find one brave, but passionate; Another prudent, but ingrate. Of beasts, the dog may claim to be The pattern of fidelity; But, for our teaching little wiser, He's both a fool and gormandizer. For proof, I cite two mastiffs, that espied A dead ass floating on a water wide. The distance growing more and more, Because the wind the carcass bore,— My friend, said one, your eyes are best;

Pray let them on the water rest:



What thing is that I seem to see? An ox, or horse? what can it be? Hey! cried his mate; what matter which, Provided we could get a flitch? It doubtless is our lawful prey: The puzzle is to find some way To get the prize; for wide the space To swim, with wind against your face. Let's drink the flood; our thirsty throats Will gain the end as well as boats. The water swallowed, by and by We'll have the carcass, high and dry — Enough to last a week, at least. Both drank as some do at a feast: Their breath was quenched before their thirst, And presently the creatures burst!

And such is man. Whatever he May set his soul to do or be, To him is possibility.

How many vows he makes!
How many steps he takes!
How does he strive, and pant, and strain,
Fortune's or Glory's prize to gain!
If round my farm off well I must,
Or fill my coffers with the dust,
Or master Hebrew, science, history,—
I make my task to drink the sea.

^{*} Did La Fontaine, to enhance the folly of these dogs, make them bad judges of the course of the wind, or did he forget what he had said a few lines above?—Ep.

One spirit's projects to fulfil,

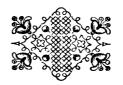
Four bodies would require; and still

The work would stop half done;

The lives of four Methuselahs,

Placed end to end for use, alas!

Would not suffice the wants of one.





Direction accepts the construction of the principal



DEMOCRITUS AND THE PEOPLE OF ABDERA.

How do I hate the tide of vulgar thought! Profane, unjust, with childish folly fraught, It breaks and bends the rays of truth divine, And by its own conceptions measures mine.

Famed Epicurus' master tried
The power of this unstable tide.
His country said the sage was mad—
The simpletons! But why?—
No prophet ever honor had
Beneath his native sky.
Democritus, in truth, was wise;
The mass were mad, with faith in lies.

So far this error went,
That all Abdera sent
To old Hippocrates
To cure the sad disease.

Our townsman, said the messengers, Appropriately shedding tears, Hath lost his wits! Democritus, By study spoiled, is lost to us. Were he but filled with ignorance, We should esteem him less a dunce.

VOL. II.

He saith that worlds like this exist, An absolutely endless list, — And peopled, even, it may be, With countless hosts as wise as we! But, not contented with such dreams, His brain with viewless "atoms" teems, Instinct with deathless life, it seems. And, never stirring from the sod below, He weighs and measures all the stars; And, while he knows the universe, Himself he doth not know. Though now his lips he strictly bars, He once delighted to converse. Come, godlike mortal, try thy art divine Where traits of worst insanity combine. Small faith the great physician lent, But still, perhaps more readily, he went. And mark what meetings strange Chance causes in this world of change! Hippocrates arrived in season, Just as his patient (void of reason!) Was searching whether reason's home, In talking animals and dumb, Be in the head, or in the heart, Or in some other local part. All calmly seated in the shade, Where brooks their softest music made, He traced, with study most insane, The convolutions of a brain: And at his feet lay many a scroll —

The works of sages on the soul.

Indeed, so much absorbed was he,
His friend, at first, he did not see.
A pair so admirably matched,
Their compliments erelong despatched.
In time and talk, as well as dress,
The wise are frugal, I confess.
Dismissing trifles, they began
At once with eagerness to scan
The life, and soul, and laws of man;
Nor stopped till they had travelled o'er all
The ground, from physical to moral.
My time and space would fail,
To give the full detail.

But I have said enough to show How little 'tis the people know. How true, then, goes the saw abroad — Their voice is but the voice of God!





THE WOLF AND THE HUNTER.

Thou lust of gain, — foul fiend, whose evil eyes Regard as nought the blessings of the skies,— Must I forever battle thee in vain? How long demandest thou to gain The meaning of my lessons plain? Will constant getting never cloy? Will man ne'er slacken to enjoy? Haste, friend; thou hast not long to live: Let me the precious word repeat, And listen to it. I entreat: A richer lesson none can give — The sovereign antidote for sorrow — ENJOY.—I will.—But when?—To-morrow.— Ah! death may take you on the way,. Why not enjoy, I ask, to-day?. Lest envious fate your hopes ingulf, As once it served the hunter and the wolf. The former, with his fatal bow, A noble deer had laid full low: A fawn approached, and quickly lay Companion of the dead, For side by side they bled. Could one have wished a richer prey?



HOMOTO Justic Car Cont. "Exmission

Such luck had been enough to sate
A hunter wise and moderate.

Meantime a boar, as big as e'er was taken,
Our archer tempted, proud, and fond of bacon.

Another candidate for Styx,
Struck by his arrow, foams and kicks.
But strangely do the shears of Fate
To cut his cable hesitate.
Alive, yet dying, there he lies,
A glorious and a dangerous prize.
And was not this enough? Not quite,
To fill a conqueror's appetite;
For, ere the boar was dead, he spied
A partridge by a furrow's side —
A trifle to his other game.
Once more his bow he drew;
The desperate boar upon him came,
And in his dying vengeance slew:
The partridge thanked him as she flew.

Thus much is to the covetous addressed; . The miserly shall have the rest.

A wolf, in passing, saw that woful sight.

O Fortune, cried the savage, with delight,
A fane to thee I'll build outright!

Four carcasses! how rich! but spare—
I'll make them last—such luck is rare,
(The miser's everlasting plea.)

They'll last a month, for—let me see—

One, two, three, four — the weeks are four, If I can count — and some days more.

Well, two days hence And I'll commence.

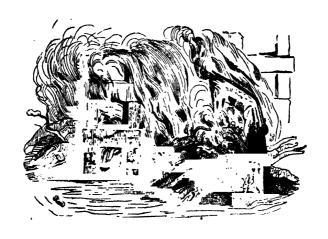
Meantime, the string upon this bow
I'll stint myself to eat;
For by its mutton-smell I know
'Tis made of entrails sweet.
His entrails rued the fatal weapon,
Which, while he heedlessly did step on,
The arrow pierced his bowels deep,
Ano laid him lifeless on the heap.

Hark, stingy souls! insatiate leeches! Our text this solemn duty teaches,— Enjoy the present; do not wait To share the wolf's or hunter's fate.









FABLE FIRST

THE FAITHLESS DEPOSITARY.



HANKS to Memory's daughters nine, Animals have graced my line: Higher heroes in my story Might have won me less of glory. Wolves, in language of the sky, Talk with dogs throughout my verse; Beasts with others shrewdly vie, Representing characters;

VOL. II.

15

Fools in furs not second hand, Sages hoofed or feathered, stand: Fewer truly are the latter, More the former — ay, and fatter.

Flourish also in my scene
Tyrants, villains, mountebanks,
Beasts incapable of thanks,
Beasts of rash and reckless pranks,
Beasts of sly and flattering mien;
Troops of liars, too, I ween.

As to men, of every age,
All are liars, saith the sage.
Had he writ but of the low,
One could hardly think it so;
But that human mortals, all,
Lie like serpents, great and small,
Had another certified it,
I, for one, should have denied it.
He who lies in Æsop's way,
Or like Homer, minstrel gray,
Is no liar, sooth to say.
Charms that bind us like a dream,
Offspring of their happy art.

Offspring of their happy art, Cloked in fiction, more than seem

Truth to offer to the heart.

Both have left us works which I

Think unworthy e'er to die.

Liar call not him who squares

All his ends and aims with theirs;

But from sacred truth to vary, Like the false depositary, Is to be, by every rule, Both a liar and a fool. The story goes:

A man of trade,
In Persia, with his neighbor made
Deposit, as he left the state,
Of iron, say a hundred weight.
Returned, said he, My iron, neighbor.
Your iron! you have lost your labor;
I grieve to say it, — 'pon my soul,
A rat has eaten up the whole.
My men were sharply scolded at,
But yet a hole, in spite of that,

Was left, as one is wont to be
In every barn or granary,
By which crept in that cursed rat.
Admiring much the novel thief,
The man affected full belief.

Erelong his faithless neighbor's child He stole away,—a heavy lad,— And then to supper bade the dad, Who thus plead off in accents sad:— It was but yesterday I had

A boy as fine as ever smiled,
An only son, as dear as life,
The darling of myself and wife.
Alas! we have him now no more,
And every joy with us is o'er.
Replied the merchant, Yesternight,
By evening's faint and dusky ray,

I saw a monstrous owl alight, And bear your darling son away To yonder tottering ruin gray. Can I believe you, when you say An owl bore off so large a prey? How could it be? the father cried; The thing is surely quite absurd; My son with ease had killed the bird. The how of it, the man replied, Is not my province to decide; I know I saw your son arise, Borne through the air before my eyes. Why should it seem a strange affair, Moreover, in a country where A single rat contrives to eat A hundred pounds of iron meat, That owls should be of strength to lift ye A booby boy that weighs but fifty? The other plainly saw the trick, Restored the iron very quick, And got, with shame as well as joy, Possession of his kidnapped boy.

The like occurred two travellers between.

One was of those

Who wear a microscope, I ween,
Each side the nose.

Would you believe their tales romantic,
Our Europe, in its monsters, beats
The lands that feel the tropic heats,
Surcharged with all that is gigantic.

This person, feeling free
To use the trope hyperbole,
Had seen a cabbage with his eyes
Exceeding any house in size.
And I have seen, the other cries,
Resolved to leave his fellow in the lurch,
A pot that would have held a church.
Why, friend, don't give that doubting look,—
The pot was made your cabbages to cook.

This pot-discoverer was a wit;
The iron-monger, too, was wise.
To such absurd and ultra lies
Their answers were exactly fit.
'Twere doing honor overmuch,
To reason or dispute with such.
To overbid them is the shortest path,
And less provocative of wrath.





THE TWO DOVES.

Two doves once cherished for each other The love that brother hath for brother. But one, of scenes domestic tiring, To see the foreign world aspiring, Was fool enough to undertake A journey long, o'er land and lake. What plan is this? the other cried; Wouldst quit so soon thy brother's side? This absence is the worst of ills: Thy heart may bear, but me it kills. Pray, let the dangers, toil, and care, Of which all travellers tell. Your courage somewhat quell. Still, if the season later were — O wait the zephyrs! - hasten not -Just now the raven, on his oak, In hoarser tones than usual spoke. My heart forebodes the saddest lot, — The falcons, nets — Alas, it rains! My brother, are thy wants supplied — Provisions, shelter, pocket-guide, And all that unto health pertains?



10年11日的第四次,我真的**进行的**

These words occasioned some demur
In our imprudent traveller.
But restless curiosity
Prevailed at last; and so said he,—
The matter is not worth a sigh;
Three days, at most, will satisfy,
And then, returning, I shall tell
You all the wonders that befell,—
With scenes enchanting and sublime
Shall sweeten all our coming time.
Who seeth nought, hath nought to say.
My travel's course, from day to day,
Will be the source of great delight.

A store of tales I shall relate, — Say there I lodged at such a date, And saw there such and such a sight. You'll think it all occurred to you. — On this, both, weeping, bade adieu. Away the lonely wanderer flew. — A thunder-cloud began to lower; He sought, as shelter from the shower, The only tree that graced the plain, Whose leaves ill turned the pelting rain. The sky once more serene above, On flew our drenched and dripping dove, And dried his plumage as he could. Next, on the borders of a wood, He spied some scattered grains of wheat, Which one, he thought, might safely eat; For there another dove he saw. -He felt the snare around him draw!

This wheat was but a treacherous bait To lure poor pigeons to their fate. The snare had been so long in use, With beak and wings he struggled loose: Some feathers perished while it stuck; But, what was worst in point of luck, A hawk, the cruelest of foes. Perceived him clearly as he rose, Off dragging, like a runaway, A piece of string. The bird of prev Had bound him, in a moment more, Much faster than he was before, But from the clouds an eagle came, And made the hawk himself his game. By war of robbers profiting, The dove for safety plied the wing, And, lighting on a ruined wall, Believed his dangers ended all. A roguish boy had there a sling,

(Age pitiless,

We must confess,)

And, by a most unlucky fling, Half killed our hapless dove; Who now, no more in love

With foreign travelling,

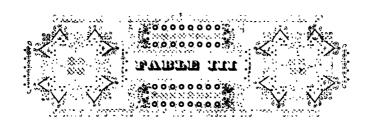
And lame in leg and wing, Straight homeward urged his crippled flight, Fatigued, but glad, arrived at night, In truly sad and piteous plight.

The doves rejoined, I leave you all to say, What pleasure might their pains repay. Ah, happy lovers, would you roam?—
Pray, let it not be far from home.
To each the other ought to be
A world of beauty ever new;
In each the other ought to see
The whole of what is good and true.

Myself have loved; nor would I then,
For all the wealth of crownéd men,
Or arch celestial, paved with gold,
The presence of those woods have sold,
And fields, and banks, and hillocks, which
Were by the joyful steps made rich,
And smiled beneath the charming eyes
Of her who made my heart a prize—
To whom I pledged it, nothing loath,
And sealed the pledge with virgin oath.
Ah, when will time such moments bring again?
To me are sweet and charming objects vain—
My soul forsaking to its restless mood?

O, did my withered heart but dare
To kindle for the bright and good,
Should not I find the charm still there?
Is love, to me, with things that were?





THE MONKEY AND THE LEOPARD.

A monkey and a leopard were The rivals at a country fair. Each advertised his own attractions. Said one, Good sirs, the highest place My merit knows; for, of his grace, The king hath seen me face to face; And, judging by his looks and actions, I gave the best of satisfactions. When I am dead, 'tis plain enough, My skin will make his royal muff. So richly is it streaked and spotted, So delicately waved and dotted, Its various beauty cannot fail to please. And, thus invited, every body sees; But soon they see, and soon depart. The monkey's show-bill to the mart His merits thus sets forth the while, All in his own peculiar style:— Come, gentlemen, I pray you, come; In magic arts I am at home.



The whole variety in which
My neighbor boasts himself so rich,
Is to his simple skin confined,
While mine is living in the mind.
Your humble servant, Monsieur Gille,
The son-in-law to Tickleville,
Pope's monkey, and of great renown,
Is now just freshly come to town,
Arrived in three bateaux, express,
Your worships to address;

For he can speak, you understand;
Can dance, and practise sleight of hand;
Can jump through hoops, and balance sticks;
In short, can do a thousand tricks;

And all for blancos six —
Not, messieurs, for a sou.
And, if you think the price won't do,
When you have seen, then he'll restore
Each man his money at the door.

The ape was not to reason blind; For who in wealth of dress can find Such charms as dwell in wealth of mind? One meets our ever-new desires, The other in a moment tires.

Alas! how many lords there are,
Of mighty sway and lofty mien,
Who, like this leopard at the fair,
Show all their talents on the skin!



THE ACORN AND THE PUMPKIN.

God's works are good. This truth to prove,
Around the world I need not move;
I do it by the nearest pumpkin.
This fruit so large, on vine so small,
Surveying once, exclaimed a bumpkin—
What could He mean who made us all?
He's left this pumpkin out of place.
If I had ordered in the case,
Upon that oak it should have hung—
A noble fruit as ever swung
To grace a tree so firm and strong.
Indeed, it was a great mistake,

As this discovery teaches,
That I myself did not partake
His counsels whom my curate preaches.
All things had then in order come;

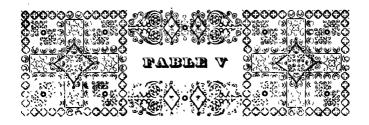
This acorn, for example,

Not bigger than my thumb,
Had not disgraced a tree so ample.
The more I think, the more I wonder
To see outraged proportion's laws,



And that without the slightest cause; God surely made an awkward blunder. With such reflections proudly fraught, Our sage grew tired of mighty thought, And threw himself on Nature's lap, Beneath an oak, to take his nap. Plump on his nose, by lucky hap, An acorn fell: he waked, and in The matted beard that graced his chin, He found the cause of such a bruise As made him different language use. O! O! he cried; I bleed! I bleed! And this is what has done the deed! But, truly, what had been my fate, Had this had half a pumpkin's weight! I see that God had reasons good, And all his works well understood. Thus home he went in humbler mood.





THE SCHOOL-BOY, THE PEDANT, AND THE OWNER OF A GARDEN.

A Boy, who savored of his school, — A double rogue and double fool, — By youth and by the privilege Which pedants have, by ancient right, To alter reason and abridge, -A neighbor robbed, with fingers light, Of flowers and fruit. This neighbor had, Of fruits that make the autumn glad, The very best — and none but he. Each season brought, from plant and tree, To him its tribute; for, in spring, His was the brightest blossoming. One day, he saw our hopeful lad Perched on the finest tree he had, Not only stuffing down the fruit, But spoiling, like a Vandal brute, The buds that play advance-courier Of plenty in the coming year. The branches, too, he rudely tore, And carried things to such a pass,



The owner sent his servant o'er
To tell the master of his class.
The latter came, and came attended
By all the urchins of his school,
And thus one plunderer's mischief mended
By pouring in an orchard-full.
It seems the pedant was intent
On making public punishment,
To teach his boys the force of law,
And strike their roguish hearts with awe.
The use of which he first must show
From Virgil and from Cicero,

And many other ancients noted,
From whom, in their own tongues, he quoted.
So long, indeed, his lecture lasted,
While not a single urchin fasted,
That, ere its close, their thievish crimes
Were multiplied a hundred times.

I hate all cloquence and reason
Expended plainly out of season.

Of all the beasts that earth have cursed
While they have fed on't,
The school-boy strikes me as the worst—
Except the pedant.
The better of these neighbors two
For me, I'm sure, would never do.



THE SCULPTOR AND THE STATUE OF JUPITER.

A BLOCK of marble was so fine,

To buy it did a sculptor hasten.

What shall my chisel, now 'tis mine —

A god, a table, or a basin?

A god, said he, the thing shall be;
I'll arm it, too, with thunder.
Let people quake, and bow the knee
With reverential wonder.

So well the cunning artist wrought
All things within a mortal's reach,
That soon the marble wanted nought
Of being Jupiter, but speech.

Indeed, the man whose skill did make
Had scarcely laid his chisel down,
Before himself began to quake,
And fear his manufacture's frown.



And even this excess of faith

The poet once scarce fell behind,
The hatred fearing, and the wrath,
Of gods the product of his mind.

This trait we see in infancy
Between the baby and its doll,
Of wax or china, it may be—
A pocket stuffed, or folded shawl.

Imagination rules the heart:

And here we find the fountain head
From whence the pagan errors start,
That o'er the teeming nations spread.

With violent and flaming zeal,

Each takes his own chimera's part;

Pygmalion doth a passion feel

For Venus chiseled by his art.

All men, as far as in them lies,

Create realities of dreams.

To truth our nature proves but ice;

To falsehood, fire it seems.





THE MOUSE METAMORPHOSED INTO A MAID.

A mouse once from an owl's beak fell; I'd not have picked it up, I wis; A Bramin did it: very well; Each country has its prejudice. The mouse, indeed, was sadly bruised. Although, as neighbors, we are used To be more kind to many others, The Bramins treat the mice as brothers. The notion haunts their heads, that when The soul goes forth from dying men, It enters worm, or bird, or beast, As Providence or Fate is pleased; And on this mystery rests their law, . Which from Pythagoras they're said to draw. And hence the Bramin kindly prayed To one who knew the wizard's trade, To give the creature, wounded sore, The form in which it lodged before. Forthwith the mouse became a maid, Of years about fifteen; A lovelier was never seen. She would have waked, I ween,



In Priam's son, a fiercer flame Than did the beauteous Grecian dame. Surprised at such a novelty,

The Bramin to the damsel cried, Your choice is free; For every he

Will seek you for his bride. Said she, Am I to have a voice?

The strongest, then, shall be my choice.

O sun! the Bramin cried, this maid is thine, And thou shalt be a son-in-law of mine. No, said the sun, this murky cloud, it seems,

In strength exceeds me, since he hides my beams;

And him I counsel you to take.

Again the reverend Bramin spake — O cloud, on-flying with thy stores of water, Pray, wast thou born to wed my daughter?

Ah, no, alas! for, you may see,
The wind is far too strong for me.
My claims with Boreas' to compare,
I must confess, I do not dare.
O wind, then cried the Bramin, vexed,
And wondering what would hinder next,—
Approach, and, with thy sweetest air,
Embrace—possess—the fairest fair.
The wind, enraptured, thither blew;—
A mountain stopped him as he flew,
To him now passed the tennis-ball,
And from him to a creature small.
Said he, I'd wed the maid, but that
I've had a quarrel with the rat.

A fool were I to take the bride
From one so sure to pierce my side.
The rat! It thrilled the damsel's ear;
The name at once seemed sweet and dear.
The rat! 'Twas one of Cupid's blows;
The like full many a maiden knows;
But all of this beneath the rose.

One smacketh ever of the place
Where first he showed the world his face.
Thus far the fable's clear as light;
But, if we take a nearer sight,
There lurks within its drapery
Somewhat of graceless sophistry;
For who, that worships e'en the glorious sun,
Would not prefer to wed some cooler one?
And doth a flea's exceed a giant's might,
Because the former can the latter bite?

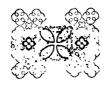
And, by the rule of strength, the rat
Had sent his bride to wed the cat;
From cat to dog, and onward still
To wolf or tiger, if you will:
Indeed, the fabulist might run
A circle backward to the sun. —
But to the change the tale supposes, —
In learned phrase, metempsychosis.
The very thing the wizard did
Its falsity exposes —

If that indeed were ever hid.

According to the Bramins' plan,
The proud, aspiring soul of man

And souls that dwell in humbler forms
Of rats and mice, and even worms,
All issue from a common source,
And, hence, they are the same of course. —
Unequal but by accident
Of organ and of tenement,
They use one pair of legs, or two,
Or e'en with none contrive to do,
As tyrant matter binds them to.
Why, then, could not so fine a frame
Constrain its heavenly guest
To wed the solar flame?
A rat her love possessed.

In all respects, compared and weighed,
The souls of men and souls of mice
Quite different are made,—
Unlike in sort as well as size.
Each fits and fills its destined part
As Heaven doth well provide;
Nor witch, nor fiend, nor magic art,
Gan set their laws aside.





THE FOOL WHO SOLD WISDOM.

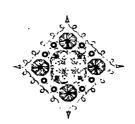
Or fools come never in the reach;.
No rule can I more wisely teach.
Nor can there be a better one
Than this, — distempered heads to shun.
We often see them, high and low.

They tickle e'en the royal ear,
As privileged and free from fear
They hurl about them joke and jeer,
At pompous lord or silly beau.

A fool, in town, did wisdom cry;
The people, eager, flocked to buy.
Each for his money got,
Paid promptly on the spot,
Besides a box upon the head,
Two fathoms' length of thread.
The most were vexed — but quite in vain;
The public only mocked their pain.



The wiser they who nothing said, But pocketed the box and thread. To search the meaning of the thing Would only laughs and hisses bring. Hath reason ever guarantied The wit of fools in speech or deed? 'Tis said of brainless heads in France, The cause of what they do is chance. One dupe, however, needs must know What meant the thread, and what the blow; So asked a sage, to make it sure. They're both hieroglyphics pure, The sage replied, without delay; All people well advised will stay From fools this fibre's length away, Or get — I hold it sure as fate — The other symbol on the pate. So far from cheating you of gold, The fool this wisdom fairly sold.





THE OYSTER AND THE LITIGANTS.

Two pilgrims on the sand espied An oyster thrown up by the tide. In hope, both swallowed ocean's fruit; But ere the fact there came dispute. While one stooped down to take the prey, The other pushed him quite away.

Said he, 'twere rather meet
To settle which shall eat.

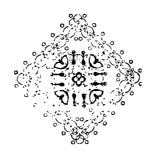
Why, he who first the oyster saw
Should be its eater, by the law;
The other should but see him do it.
Replied his mate, if thus you view it,
Thank God, the lucky eye is mine.
But I've an eye not worse than thine,
The other cried, and will be cursed,
If, too, I didn't see it first.
You saw it, did you? Grant it true,
I saw it then, and felt it too.

Amidst this sweet affair,
Arrived a person very big,
Yeleped Sir Nincom Periwig.
They made him judge,—to set the matter square.



Sir Nincom, with a solemn face,
Took up the oyster and the case:
In opening both, the first he swallowed,
And, in due time, his judgment followed.
Attend: the court awards you each a shell
Cost free; depart in peace, and use them well.

Foot up the cost of suits at law,
The leavings reckon and awards,
The cash you'll see Sir Nincom draw,
And leave the parties — purse and cards.

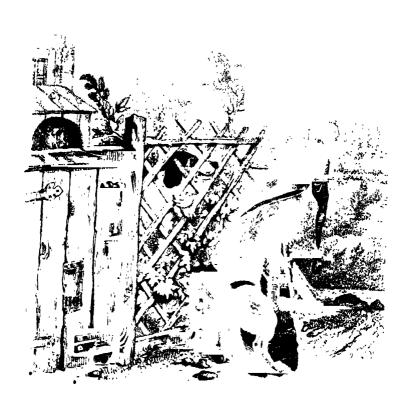




THE WOLF AND THE LEAN DOG.

A TROUTLING, some time since,* Endeavored vainly to convince A hungry fisherman Of his unfitness for the frying-pan. That controversy made it plain That letting go a good secure, In hope of future gain, Is but imprudence pure. The fisherman had reason good — The troutling did the best he could -Both argued for their lives. Now, if my present purpose thrives, I'll prop my former proposition By building on a small addition. A certain wolf, in point of wit The prudent fisher's opposite, A dog once finding far astray, Prepared to take him as his prey. The dog his leanness plead; Your lordship, sure, he said,

^{*} See Book V Fable III.



Cannot be very eager
To eat a dog so meagre.
To wait a little do not grudge:

The wedding of my master's only daughter
Will cause of fatted calves and fowls a slaughter;

And then, as you yourself can judge,
I cannot help becoming fatter.
The wolf, believing, waived the matter,
And so, some days therefrom,

Returned with sole design to see If fat enough his dog might be.

The rogue was now at home: He saw the hunter through the fence.

My friend, said he, please wait; I'll be with you a moment hence,

And fetch our porter of the gate. This porter was a dog immense, That left to wolves no future tense.

Suspicion gave our wolf a jog, — It might not be so safely tampered. My service to your porter dog,

Was his reply, as off he scampered.

His legs proved better than his head,
And saved him life to learn his trade.





NOTHING TOO MUCH.

Look where we will throughout creation, We look in vain for moderation. There is a certain golden mean, Which nature's sovereign Lord, I ween, Designed the path of all forever.

Doth one pursue it? Never. E'en things which by their nature bless, Are turned to curses by excess.

The grain, best gift of Ceres fair, Green waving in the genial air, By overgrowth exhausts the soil;

By superfluity of leaves

Defrauds the treasure of its sheaves, And mocks the busy farmer's toil. Not less redundant is the tree, So sweet a thing is luxury. The grain within due bounds to keep, Their Maker licenses the sheep The leaves excessive to retrench.

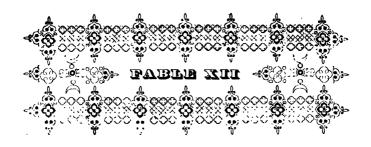
In troops they spread across the plain, And, nibbling down the hapless grain, Contrive to spoil it, root and branch.



So, then, with license from on high,
The wolves are sent on sheep to prey;
The whole the greedy gluttons slay;
Or, if they don't, they try.
Next, men are sent on wolves to take
The vengeance now condign:
In turn the same abuse they make
Of this behest divine.

Of animals, the human kind
Are to excess the most inclined.
On low and high we make the charge, —
Indeed, upon the race at large.
There liveth not the seal select
That sinneth not in this respect.
Of "Nought too much," the fact is,
All preach the truth, — none practise.





THE WAX-CANDLE.

From bowers of gods the bees came down to man.

On Mount Hymettus, first, they say,

They made their home, and stored away

The treasures which the zephyrs fan.

When men had robbed these daughters of the sky,

And left their palaces of nectar dry, —

Or, as in French the thing's explained,

When hives were of their honey drained, -

The spoilers 'gan the wax to handle,

And fashioned from it many a candle.

Of these, one, seeing clay, made brick by fire, Remain uninjured by the teeth of time,

Was kindled into great desire

For immortality sublime.

And so this new Empedocles Upon the blazing pile one sees,

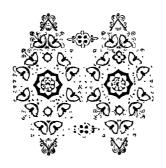
Self-doomed by purest folly To fate so melancholy.

The candle lacked philosophy.

All things are made diverse to be.



To wander from our destined tracks—
There cannot be a vainer wish.
But this Empedocles of wax,
That melted in the chafing-dish,
Was truly not a greater fool
Than he of whom we read at school.





JUPITER AND THE PASSENGER.

How danger would the gods enrich,
If we the vows remembered which
It drives us to! But, danger past,
Kind Providence is paid the last.
No earthly debt is treated so.
Now, Jove, the wretch exclaims, will wait;
He sends no sheriff to one's gate,
Like creditors below;
But let me ask the dolt
What means the thunderbolt.

A passenger, endangered by the sea,
Had vowed a hundred oxen good
To him who quelled old Terra's brood.
He had not one: as well might he
Have vowed a hundred elephants.
Arrived on shore, his good intents
Were dwindled to the smoke which rose
An offering merely for the nose,



From half a dozen beefless bones. Great Jove, said he, behold my vow! The fumes of beef thou breathest now Are all thy godship ever owns: From debt I therefore stand acquitted. With seeming smile, the god submitted, But not long after caught him well, By sending him a dream, to tell Of treasure hid: Off ran the liar, As if to quench a house on fire, And on a band of robbers fell. As but a crown he had that day, He promised them of sterling gold A hundred talents, truly told; Directing where concealed they lay, In such a village on their way. The rogues so much the tale suspected, Said one, If we should suffer you to, You'd cheaply get us all detected. Go, then, and bear your gold to Pluto.





THE CAT AND THE FOX.

THE cat and fox, when saints were all the rage, Together went on pilgrimage.

Arch hypocrites and swindlers, they,

By sleight of face and sleight of paw,
Regardless both of right and law,

Contrived expenses to repay,
By eating many a fowl and cheese,
And other tricks as bad as these.
Disputing served them to beguile
Their road of many a weary mile.
Disputing! but for this resort,
The world would go to sleep, in short.
Our pilgrims, as a thing of course,
Disputed till their throats were hoarse.

Then, dropping to a lower tone, They talked of this, and talked of that, Till Renard whispered to the cat,

You think yourself a knowing one: How many cunning tricks have you? For I've a hundred, old and new, All ready in my haversack.

The cat replied, I do not lack,

Though with but one provided.



And, truth to honor, for that matter, I hold it than a thousand better.

In fresh dispute they sided;
And loudly were they at it, when
Approached a mob of dogs and men.
Now, said the cat, your tricks ransack,
And put your cunning brains to rack,
One life to save; I'll show you mine—
A trick, you see, for saving nine.
With that, she climbed a lofty pine.
The fox his hundred ruses tried,
And yet no safety found.

A hundred times he falsified

The nose of every hound— Was here, and there, and every where,

Above, and under ground;
But yet to stop he did not dare.
Pent in a hole, it was no joke
To meet the terriers or the smoke.
So, leaping into upper air,
He met two dogs, that choked him there.

Expedients may be too many, Consuming time to choose and try.

On one, but that as good as any, 'Tis best in danger to rely.





THE HUSBAND, THE WIFE, AND THE THIEF.

A man that loved, — and loved his wife, — Still led an almost joyless life. No tender look, nor gracious word, Nor smile that, coming from a bride, Its object would have deified, E'er told her doting lord The love with which he burned Was in its kind returned. Still, unrepining at his lot, This man, thus tied in Hymen's knot, Thanked God for all the good he got. But why? If love doth fail to season Whatever pleasures Hymen gives, I'm sure I cannot see the reason Why one for him the happier lives. However, since his wife Had ne'er caressed him in her life. He made complaint of it one night. The entrance of a thief Cut short his tale of grief, And gave the lady such a fright, She shrunk from dreaded harms Within her husband's arms.



अभागभावात कर मात्र महिलाक्षां कर एक राज्याचा होता.

Good thief, cried he,

This joy so sweet I owe to thee:

Now take, as thy reward,

Of all that owns me lord,

Whatever suits thee, save my spouse;

Ay, if thou pleasest, take the house.

As thieves are not remarkably

O'erstocked with modesty,

This fellow made quite free.

From this account it doth appear,
The passions all are ruled by fear.
Aversion may be conquered by it,
And even love may not defy it.
But still some cases there have been
Where love hath ruled the roast, I ween.
That lover witness, highly bred,
Who burnt his house above his head,
And all to clasp a certain dame,
And bear her harmless through the flame.

This transport through the fire,
I own, I much admire;
And, for a Spanish soul, reputed coolish,
I think it grander even than 'twas foolish.*

^{*} La Fontaine here refers to the adventure of the Spanish Count Villa Medina with Elizabeth of France, wife of Philip IV. of Spain. The former, having invited the Spanish court to a splendid entertainment in his palace, had it set on fire, that he might personally rescue the said lady from its flames.



THE TREASURE AND THE TWO MEN.

A MAN whose credit failed, and, what was worse, Who lodged the devil in his purse, -That is to say, lodged nothing there, -By self-suspension in the air, Concluded his accounts to square, Since, should be not, he understood, From various tokens, famine would — A death for which no mortal wight Had ever yet an appetite. A ruin, crowned with ivy green, Was of his tragedy the scene. His hangman's noose he duly tied, And then to drive a nail he tried; — But by his blows the wall gave way, Now tremulous and old, Disclosing to the light of day A sum of hidden gold. He clutched it up, and left Despair · To struggle with his halter there. Nor did the much delighted man E'en stop to count it as he ran.



But, while he went, the owner came, Who loved it with a secret flame, Too much indeed for kissing,—
And found his money—missing!
O Heavens! he cried, shall I
Such riches lose, and still not die?
Shall I not hang?—as I, in fact,
Might justly do if cord I lacked;
But now, without expense, I can;
This cord here only lacks a man.
The saving was no saving clause;

It suffered not his heart to falter, Until it reached its final pause

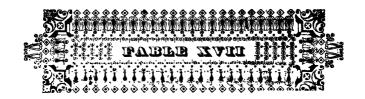
As full possessor of the halter.—
'Tis thus the miser often grieves.
Who e'er the benefit receives
Of what he owns, he never must—

Mere treasurer for thieves, Or relatives, or dust.

But what say we about the trade In this affair by Fortune made? Why, what but that it was just like her?

In freaks like this delighteth she.

The shorter any turn may be,
The better it is sure to strike her.
It fills that goddess full of glee
A self-suspended man to see;
And that it does especially,
When made so unexpectedly.



THE MONKEY AND THE CAT.

SLY Bertrand and Ratto in company sat, (The one was a monkey, the other a cat,)

Co-servants and lodgers:

More mischievous codgers

Ne'er messed from a platter, since platters were flat. Was any thing wrong in the house or about it,
The neighbors were blameless,—no mortal could doubt it;

For Bertrand was thievish, and Ratto, so nice,
More attentive to cheese than he was to the mice.
One day the two plunderers sat by the fire,
Where chestnuts were roasting, with looks of desire.
To steal them would be a right noble affair.
A double inducement our heroes drew there—
'Twould benefit them, could they swallow their fill,
And then 'twould occasion to somebody ill.
Said Bertrand to Ratto, My brother, to-day
Exhibit your powers in a masterly way,

And take me these chestnuts, I pray, Which, were I but otherwise fitted (As I am ingeniously witted)

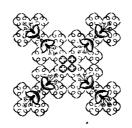


For pulling things out of the flame,
Would stand but a pitiful game.

'Tis done, replied Ratto, all prompt to obey;
And thrust out his paw in a delicate way.

First giving the ashes a scratch,
He opened the coveted batch;
Then lightly and quickly impinging,
He drew out, in spite of the singeing,
One after another, the chestnuts at last,—
While Bertrand contrived to devour them as fast.
A servant girl enters. Adieu to the fun.
Our Ratto was hardly contented, says one.—

No more are the princes, by flattery paid For furnishing help in a different trade, And burning their fingers to bring More power to some mightier king.





THE KITE AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

A NOTED thief, the kite,

Had set a neighborhood in fright, And raised the clamorous noise Of all the village boys, • When, by misfortune, - sad to say, -A nightingale fell in his way. Spring's herald begged him not to eat A bird for music — not for meat. O spare! cried she, and I'll relate The crime of Tereus and his fate. — What's Tereus? Is it food for kites?— No, but a king, of female rights The villain spoiler, whom I taught A lesson with repentance fraught; And, should it please you not to kill, My song about his fall Your very heart shall thrill, As it, indeed, does all. — Replied the kite, A pretty thing, When I am faint and famishing,



To let you go and hear you sing!—
Ah, but I entertain the king!—
Well, when he takes you, let him hear
Your tale, full wonderful, no doubt;
For me, a kite, I'll go without.
An empty stomach hath no ear.





THE SHEPHERD AND HIS FLOCK.

WHAT! shall I lose them one by one, This stupid, coward throng? And never shall the wolf have done? They were at least a thousand strong, But still they've let poor Robin fall a prey! Ah, woe's the day! Poor Robin Wether lying dead! He followed for a bit of bread His master through the crowded city, And would have followed, had he led, Around the world. O! what a pity! My pipe, and even step, he knew; To meet me when I came, he flew; In hedge-row shade we napped together; Alas, alas, my Robin Wether! When Willy thus had duly said His eulogy upon the dead, And unto everlasting fame Consigned poor Robin Wether's name, He then harangued the flock at large, From proud old chieftain rams Down to the smallest lambs, Addressing them this weighty charge, -



C. THER. IND. IN ADM. MILE MILE.



Against the wolf, as one, to stand,
In firm, united, fearless band,
By which they might expel him from their land.
Upon their faith, they would not flinch,
They promised him, a single inch.
We'll choke, said they, the murderous glutton
Who robbed us of our Robin Mutton.

Their lives they pledged against the beast,
And Willy gave them all a feast.
But evil Fate, than Phœbus faster,
Ere night, had brought a new disaster:
A wolf there came. By nature's law,
The total flock were prompt to run;
And yet 'twas not the wolf they saw,
But shadow of him, from the setting sun.

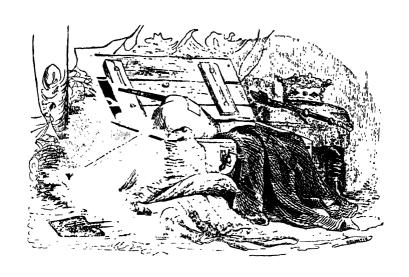
Harangue a craven soldiery,
What heroes they will seem to be!
But let them snuff the smoke of battle,
Or even hear the ramrods rattle,
Adieu to all their spunk and mettle;
Your own example will be vain,
And exhortations, to retain
The timid cattle.







DET DETERMENT WAR TO BE WELL AND THE TO



FABLE FIRST.

THE TWO RATS, THE FOX, AND THE EGG.

ADDRESS TO MADAM DE LA SABLIÈRE.

ou, Iris, 'twere an easy task to praise;
But you refuse the incense of my lays.
In this you are unlike all other mortals,
Who welcome all the praise that seeks their portals;
Not one who is not soothed by sound so sweet.
For me to blame this humor were not meet,
By gods and mortals shared in common,
And, in the main, by lovely woman.

VOL. II.

23

That drink, so vaunted by the rhyming trade, That cheers the god who deals the thunder-blow, And oft intoxicates the gods below,—

The nectar, Iris, — is of praises made.
You taste it not. But, in its place,
Wit, science, even trifles, grace
Your bill of fare; but, for that matter,
The world will not believe the latter.

Well, leave the world in unbelief. Still, science, trifles, fancies light as air, I hold, should mingle in a bill of fare,

Each giving each its due relief; As, where the gifts of Flora fall,

On different flowers we see
Alight the busy bee,
Educing sweet from all.

Thus much premised, don't think it strange, Or aught beyond my muse's range,

If e'en my fables should infold,
Among their nameless trumpery,
The traits of a philosophy
Far-famed as subtile, charming, bold.
They call it new — the men of wit;
Perhaps you have not heard of it.*
My verse will tell you what it means:—
They say that beasts are mere machines;

^{*} Madam de la Sablière was one of the most learned women of the age in which she lived, and knew more of the philosophy of Descartes, in which she was a believer, than our poet; but she dreaded the reputation of a "Blue-stocking," and for this reason La Fontaine addresses her as if she might be ignorant of the Cartesian theory.

That, in their doings, every thing Is done by virtue of a spring—

No sense, nor soul, nor notion,

But matter merely — set in motion; —

Just such the watch in kind,

Which joggeth on, to purpose blind.

Now ope, and read within its breast —

The place of soul is by its wheels possessed.

One moves a second, that a third, Till finally its sound is heard.

And now the beast, our sages say,

Is moved precisely in this way.

An object strikes it in a certain place:

The spot thus struck, without a moment's space,

To neighboring parts the news conveys:

Thus sense receives it through the chain,

And takes impression. — How? Explain. —

Not I. They say, by sheer necessity,

From will as well as passion free,

The animal is found the thrall

Of movements which the vulgar call

Joy, sadness, pleasure, pain, and love —

The cause extrinsic and above. —

Believe it not. What's this I hold?

Why, sooth, it is a watch of gold —

Its life, the mere unbending of a spring.

And we? — are quite a different thing.

Hearhow Descartes—Descartes, whom all applaud, Whom pagans would have made a god,

Who holds, in fact, the middle place

Twixt ours and the celestial race,

About as does the plodding ass From man to oyster as you pass— Hear how this author states the case: Of all the tribes to being brought By our Creator out of nought, I only have the gift of thought. Now, Iris, you will recollect We were by older science taught That when brutes think, they don't reflect. Descartes proceeds beyond the wall, And says they do not think at all. This you believe with ease; And so could I, if I should please. Still, in the forest, when, from morn Till midday, sounds of dog and horn Have terrified the stag forlorn; — When he has doubled forth and back, And labored to confound his track. Till tired and spent with efforts vain— An ancient stag, of antlers ten; — He puts a younger in his place, All fresh, to weary out the chase. — What thoughts for one that merely grazes! The doublings, turnings, windings, mazes, The substituting fresher bait, Were worthy of a man of state— And worthy of a better fate! To yield to rascal dogs his breath Is all the honor of his death. And when the partridge danger spies,

Before her brood have strength to rise,

She wisely counterfeits a wound,
And drags her wing upon the ground—
Thus, from her home, beside some ancient log,
Safe drawing off the sportsman and his dog;

And while the latter seems to seize her,

The victim of an easy chase—

Your teeth are not for such as me, sir,

She cries, And flies,

And laughs the former in his face.

Far north, 'tis said, the people live In customs nearly primitive;

That is to say, are bound In ignorance profound:—

I mean the people human; For animals are dwelling there With skill such buildings to prepare

As could on earth but few men. Firm laid across the torrent's course, Their work withstands its mighty force, Sq damming it from shore to shore,

That, gliding smoothly o'er,

In even sheets the waters pour. Their work, as it proceeds, they grade and bevel,

Or bring it up to plumb and level; First lay their logs, and then with mortar smear, As if directed by an engineer.

Each labors for the public good;
The old command, the youthful brood
Cut down, and shape, and place the wood.

Compared with theirs, e'en Plato's model state Were but the work of some apprentice pate.

Such are the beaver folks, who know Enough to house themselves from snow, And bridge, though they can swim, the pools. Meanwhile, our kinsmen are such fools,

In spite of their example,
They dwell in huts less ample,
And cross the streams by swimming,
However cold and brimming!
Now, that the skilful beaver
Is but a body void of spirit,
From whomsoever I might hear it,
I would believe it never.

But I go further in the case.

Pray listen while I tell

A thing which lately fell

From one of truly royal race.*

A prince beloved by Victory,

The north's defender, here shall be

My voucher and your guaranty;

Whose mighty name alone

Commands the sultan's throne,
The king whom Poland calls her own.
This king declares (kings cannot lie, we hear)

That, on his own frontier,
Some animals there are
Engaged in ceaseless war;

^{*} John Sobieski.

From age to age the quarrel runs,
Transmitted down from sires to sons;
(These beasts, he says, are to the fox akin;)

And with more skill no war hath been,
By highest military powers,
Conducted in this age of ours.
Guards, piquets, scouts, and spies,
And ambuscade that hidden lies,
The foe to capture by surprise,
And many a shrewd appliance
Of that pernicious, cursed science,
The daughter of the Stygian wave,
And mother harsh of heroes brave,
Those military creatures have.
To chant their feats a bard we lack,

Till Death shall give us Homer back.
And should he such a wonder do,
And, while his hand was in, release
Old Epicurus' rival* too,

What would the latter say to facts like these? Why, as I've said, that nature does such things

In animals by means of springs;
That Memory is but corporeal;
And that to do the things arrayed
So proudly in my story all,

The animal but needs her aid.

At each return, the object, so to speak, Proceeds directly to her store

^{*} Descartes.

With keenest optics — there to seek
The image it had traced before,
Which, found, proceeds forthwith to act
Just as at first it did, in fact,
By neither thought nor reason backed.

Not so with us, beasts perpendicular; With us kind Heaven is more particular.

Self-ruled by independent mind, We're not the sport of objects blind, Nor e'en to instinct are consigned.

I walk; I talk; I feel the sway
Of power within
This nice machine
It cannot but obey.

This power, although with matter linked, Is comprehended as distinct.

Indeed, 'tis comprehended better, In truth and essence, than is matter.

O'er all our arts it is supreme.

But how doth matter understand Or hear its sovereign lord's command? Here doth a difficulty seem:

I see the tool obey the hand;
But then the hand, who guideth it?
Who guides the stars, in order fit?
Perhaps each mighty world,
Since from its Maker hurled,
Some angel may have kept in custody.

However that may be, A spirit dwells in such as we; It moves our limbs; we feel its mandates now; We see and know it rules, but know not how:

Nor shall we know, indeed,
Till in the breast of God we read.
And, speaking in all verity,
Descartes is just as ignorant as we;
In things beyond a mortal's ken,
He knows no more than other men.
But, Iris, I confess to this,
That in the beasts of which I speak
Such spirit it were vain to seek,
For man its only temple is.
Yet beasts must have a place
Beneath our godlike race,
Which no mere plant requires
Although the plant respires.

But what shall one reply
To what I next shall certify?
Two rats, in foraging, fell on an egg,—
For gentry such as they
A genteel dinner every way;
They needed not to find an ox's leg.
Brimful of joy and appetite,
They were about to sack the box,
So tight without the aid of locks,
When suddenly there came in sight
A personage—Sir Pullet Fox.
Sure, luck was never more untoward
Since Fortune was a vixen froward!

24

VOT. II.

How should they save their egg and bacon?
Their plunder couldn't then be bagged;
Should it in forward paws be taken,
Or rolled along, or dragged?
Each method seemed impossible,
And each was then of danger full.

Necessity, ingenious mother,
Brought forth what helped them from their pother.
As still there was a chance to save their prey,—
The spunger yet some hundred yards away,—
One seized the egg, and turned upon his back,
And then, in spite of many a thump and thwack,
That would have torn, perhaps, a coat of mail,

The other dragged him by the tail.
Who dares the inference to blink,
That beasts possess wherewith to think?

Were I commissioned to bestow
This power on creatures here below,
The beasts should have as much of mind
As infants of the human kind.
Think not the latter from their birth?
It hence appears there are on earth
That have the simple power of thought
Where reason hath no knowledge wrought.
And on this wise an equal power I'd yield
To all the various tenants of the field;
Not reason such as in ourselves we find,
But something more than any mainspring blind.
A speck of matter I would subtilize

Almost beyond the reach of mental eyes; -

An atom's essence, one might say,

An extract of a solar ray,

More quick and pungent than a flame of fire, -

For if of flame the wood is sire,

Cannot the flame, itself refined,

Give some idea of the mind?

Comes not the purest gold

From lead, as we are told?

To feel and choose, my work should soar — Unthinking judgment — nothing more.

No monkey of my manufacture

Should argue from his sense or fact, sure:

But my allotment to mankind

Should be of very different mind.

We men should share in double measure,

Or rather have a twofold treasure; -

The one the soul, the same in all

That bear the name of animal —

The sages, dunces, great and small,

That tenant this our teeming ball;—

The other, still another soul,

Which should to mortals here belong

In common with the angel throng;

Which, made an independent whole, Could pierce the skies to worlds of light,

Within a point have room to be,—

Its life a morn, sans noon or night,

Exempt from all destructive change, —

A thing as real as 'tis strange.

In infancy this child of day
Should glimmer but a feeble ray.
Its earthly organs stronger grown,
The beam of reason, brightly thrown,
Should pierce the darkness, thick and gross,
That holds the other, prisoned close.







THE MAN AND THE ADDER.

You villain! cried a man who found An adder coiled upon the ground, To do a very grateful deed For all the world, I shall proceed.

On this the animal perverse (I mean the snake; Pray don't mistake The human for the worse)

Was caught and bagged, and, worst of all, His blood was by his captor to be spilt Without regard to innocence or guilt. Howe'er, to show the why, these words let fall

His judge and jailer, proud and tall: -

Thou type of all ingratitude!

All charity to hearts like thine Is folly, certain to be rued.

Die, then, Thou foe of men!

Thy temper and thy teeth malign Shall never hurt a hair of mine. The muffled serpent, on his side, The best a serpent could, replied,— If all this world's ingrates

Must meet with such a death,
Who from this worst of fates
Could save his breath?
Upon thyself thy law recoils;
I throw myself upon thy broils,
Thy graceless revelling on spoils;
If thou but homeward cast an eye,
Thy deeds all mine will justify.
But strike: my life is in thy hand;
Thy justice, all may understand,
Is but thy interest, pleasure, or caprice:—
Pronounce my sentence on such laws as these.
But give me leave to tell thee, while I can,
The type of all ingratitude is man.

By such a lecture somewhat foiled, The other back a step recoiled,

And finally replied,—

Thy reasons are abusive, And wholly inconclusive.

I might the case decide

Because to me such right belongs; . But let's refer the case of wrongs.

The snake agreed; they to a cow referred it, Who, being called, came graciously and heard it.

Then, summing up, What need, said she In such a case, to call on me? The adder's right, plain truth to bellow; For years I've nursed this haughty fellow,

Who, but for me, had long ago Been lodging with the shades below. For him my milk has had to flow,

My calves, at tender age, to die. And for this best of wealth, And often reëstablished health,

What pay, or even thanks, have 1? Here, feeble, old, and worn, alas! I'm left without a bite of grass.

Were I but left, it might be weathered, But, shame to say it, I am tethered. And now my fate is surely sadder Than if my master were an adder,

With brains within the latitude
Of such immense ingratitude.
This, gentles, is my honest view;
And so I bid you both adieu.

The man, confounded and astonished To be so faithfully admonished,

Replied, What fools to listen, now,
To this old, silly, dotard cow!
Let's trust the ox. Let's trust, replied
The crawling beast, well gratified.

So said, so done;
The ox, with tardy pace, came on,
And, ruminating o'er the case,
Declared, with very serious face,
That years of his most painful toil
Had clothed with Ceres' gifts our soil—
Her gifts to men—but always sold
To beasts for higher cost than gold;

And that for this, for his reward,
More blows than thanks returned his lord;
And then, when age had chilled his blood,

And men would quell the wrath of Heaven, Out must be poured the vital flood,

For others' sins, all thankless given.

So spake the ox; and then the man; —
Away with such a dull declaimer!

Instead of judge, it is his plan

To play accuser and defamer.

A tree was next the arbitrator,

And made the wrong of man still greater.

It served as refuge from the heat,

The showers, and storms, which madly beat;

It grew our gardens' greatest pride, Its shadow spreading far and wide,

And bowed itself with fruit beside.

But yet a mercenary clown

With cruel iron chopped it down.

Behold the recompense for which,

Year after year, it did enrich,

With spring's sweet flowers, and autumn's fruits, And summer's shade, both men and brutes,

And warmed the hearth with many a limb Which winter from its top did trim.

Why could not man have pruned and spared,

And with itself for ages shared?

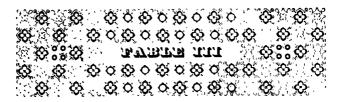
Much scorning thus to be convinced,

The man resolved his cause to gain.

Quoth he, My goodness is evinced By hearing this, 'tis very plain; Then flung the serpent, bag and all, With fatal force, against a wall.

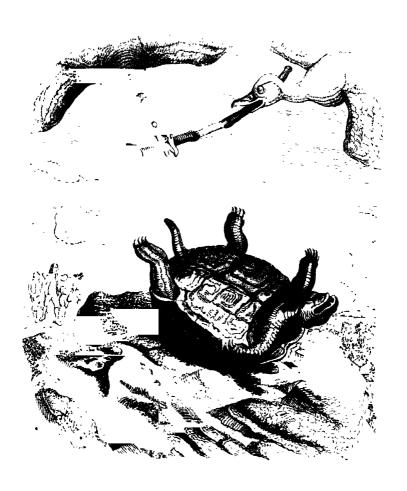
So ever is it with the great,
With whom the whim doth always run
That Heaven all creatures doth create
For their behoof, beneath the sun—
Count they four feet, or two, or none.
If one should dare the fact dispute,
He's straight set down a stupid brute.
Now, grant it so,—such lords among,
What should be done, or said, or sung?
At distance speak, or hold your tongue.





THE TORTOISE AND THE TWO DUCKS.

A LIGHT-BRAINED tortoise, anciently, Tired of her hole, the world would see. Prone are all such, self-banishéd, to roam — Prone are all cripples to abhor their home. Two ducks, to whom the gossip told The secret of her purpose bold, Professed to have the means whereby They could her wishes gratify. Our boundless road, said they, behold! It is the open air; And through it we will bear You safe o'er land and ocean. Republics, kingdoms, you will view, And famous cities, old and new; And get of customs, laws, a notion,— Of various wisdom various pieces, As did, indeed, the sage Ulysses. The eager tortoise waited not To question what Ulysses got, But closed the bargain on the spot. A nice machine the birds devise To bear their pilgrim through the skies.



Athwart her mouth a stick they throw:
Now bite it hard, and don't let go,
They say, and seize each duck an end,
And, swiftly flying, upward tend.
It made the people gape and stare
Beyond the expressive power of word

Beyond the expressive power of words, To see a tortoise cut the air,

Exactly poised between two birds.

A miracle, they cried, is seen!
There goes the flying tortoise queen!
The queen! ('twas thus the tortoise spoke;)
I'm truly that, without a joke.
Much better had she held her tongue;
For, opening that whereby she clung,
Before the gazing crowd she fell,
And dashed to bits her brittle shell.

Imprudence, vanity, and babble,And idle curiosity,An ever-undivided rabble,Have all the same paternity.





THE FISHES AND THE CORMORANT.

No pond nor pool within his haunt But paid a certain cormorant Its contribution from its fishes, And stocked his kitchen with good dishes. Yet, when old age the bird had chilled, His kitchen was less amply filled. All cormorants, however gray, Must die, or for themselves purvey. But ours had now become so blind, His finny prey he could not find; And, having neither hook nor net, His appetite was poorly met. What hope, with famine thus infested? Necessity, whom history mentions A famous mother of inventions, The following stratagem suggested: — He found upon the water's brink A crab, to which said he, My friend, A weighty errand let me send; Go quicker than a wink — Down to the fishes sink,



And tell them they are doomed to die; For, ere eight days have hastened by, Its lord will fish this water dry.

The crab, as fast as she could scrabble, Went down, and told the scaly rabble. What bustling, gathering, agitation! Straight up they send a deputation

To wait upon the ancient bird.

Sir Cormorant, whence hast thou heard

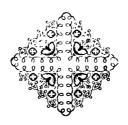
This dreadful news? And what Assurance of it hast thou got? How such a danger can we shun? Pray tell us, what is to be done? Why, change your dwelling-place, said he. What, change our dwelling! How can we? O, by your leave, I'll take that care,

And, one by one, in safety bear You all to my retreat:

The path's unknown
To any feet,
Except my own.

A pool, scooped out by Nature's hands,
Amidst the desert rocks and sands,
Where human traitors never come,
Shall save your people from their doom.
The fish republic swallowed all,
And, coming at the fellow's call,
Were singly borne away to stock
A pond beneath a lonely rock;

And there good prophet cormorant, Proprietor and bailiff sole, From narrow water, clear and shoal, With ease supplied his daily want, And taught them, at their own expense, That heads well stored with common sense Give no devourers confidence. -Still did the change not hurt their case, Since, had they staid, the human race, Successful by pernicious art, Would have consumed as large a part. What matters who your flesh devours, Of human or of bestial powers? In this respect, or wild or tame, All stomachs seem to me the same: The odds is small, in point of sorrow, Of death to-day, or death to-morrow.







THE BURIER AND HIS COMRADE.

A CLOSE-FIST had his money hoarded Beyond the room his till afforded. His avarice ave growing ranker, (Whereby his mind of course grew blanker,) He was perplexed to choose a banker; For banker he must have, he thought, Or all his heap would come to nought. I fear, said he, if kept at home, And other robbers should not come, It might be equal cause of grief That I had proved myself the thief. The thief! Is to enjoy one's pelf To rob or steal it from one's self? My friend, could but my pity reach you, This lesson I would gladly teach you, — That wealth is weal no longer than Diffuse and part with it you can: Without that power, it is a woe. Would you for age keep back its flow? Age buried 'neath its joyless snow? With pains of getting, care of got Consumes the value, every jot, Of gold that one can never spare. To take the load of such a care, Assistants were not very rare.

The earth was that which pleased him best. Dismissing thought of all the rest, He with his friend, his trustiest,—

A sort of shovel-secretary,—
Went forth his hoard to bury.
Safe done, a few days afterward,
The man must look beneath the sward—
When, what a mystery! behold
The mine exhausted of its gold!
Suspecting, with the best of cause,
His friend was privy to his loss,
He bade him, in a cautious mood,
To come as soon as well he could,
For still some other coins he had,
Which to the rest he wished to add.
Expecting thus to get the whole,
The friend put back the sum he stole,
Then came with all despatch.

The other proved an overmatch: Resolved at length to save by spending, His practice thus most wisely mending, The total treasure home he carried—— No longer hoarded it or buried.

Chapfallen was the thief, when gone He saw his prospects and his pawn.

From this it may be stated, That knaves with ease are cheated.





"UNA DE OUDLE TOTAL TOTAL TOTAL ENTRY CHARLES."



THE WOLF AND THE SHEPHERDS

A wolf, replete
With humanity sweet,
(A trait not much suspected,)
On his cruel deeds,
The fruit of his needs,
Profoundly thus reflected.

I'm hated, said he,
As joint enemy,
By hunters, dogs, and clowns.
They swear I shall die,
And their hue and cry
The very thunder drowns.

My brethren have fled,
With price on the head,
From England's merry land.
King Edgar came out,
And put them to rout,
With many a deadly band.

And there's not a squire
But blows up the fire
By hostile proclamation;
Nor a human brat
Dares cry, but that
Its mother mocks my nation.

And all for what?
For a sheep with the rot,
Or scabby, mangy ass,
Or some snarling cur,
With less meat than fur,
On which I've broken fast!

Well, henceforth I'll strive
That nothing alive
Shall die to quench my thirst
No lambkin shall fall,
Nor puppy, at all,
To glut my maw accurst.
With grass I'll appease,
Or browse on the trees,
Or die of famine first.

What of carcass warm?

Is it worth the storm

Of universal hate?

As he spoke these words,

The lords of the herds,

All seated at their hait.

He saw; and observed
The meat which was served
Was nought but roasted lamb!
O! O! said the beast,
Repent of my feast—
All butcher as I am—
On these vermin mean,
Whose guardians e'en
Eat at a rate quadruple!—
Themselves and their dogs,
As greedy as hogs,
And I, a wolf, to scruple!

Look out for your wool!

I'll not be a fool,

The very pet I'll eat;

The lamb the best looking,

Without any cooking,

I'll strangle from the teat;

And swallow the dam,

As well as the lamb,

And stop her foolish bleat.

Old Hornie, too,—rot him,—

The sire that begot him

Shall be among my meat!

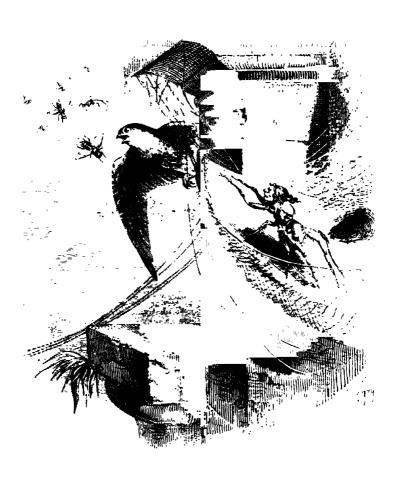
Well-reasoning beast!
Were we sent to feast
On creatures wild and tame?

And shall we reduce
The beasts to the use
Of vegetable game?

Shall animals not
Have flesh-hook or pot,
As in the age of gold?
And we claim the right,
In the pride of our might,
Themselves to have and hold?

O, shepherds that keep
Your folds full of sheep,
The wolf was only wrong
Because, so to speak,
His jaws were too weak
To break your palings strong.







THE SPIDER AND THE SWALLOW.

O JUPITER, whose fruitful brain, By odd obstetrics freed from pain, Bore Pallas, erst my mortal foe, Pray listen to my tale of woe. This Progne takes my lawful prey. As through the air she cuts her way, And skims the waves in seeming play, My flies she catches from my door, — Yes, mine — I emphasize the word, — And, but for this accursed bird. My net would hold an ample store; For I have woven it of stuff To hold the strongest strong enough. — 'Twas thus, in terms of insolence, Complained the fretful spider, once Of palace-tapestry a weaver, But then a spinster and deceiver, That hoped within her toils to bring Of insects all that ply the wing. The sister swift of Philomel, Intent on business, prospered well; In spite of the complaining pest,

The insects carried to her nest—

Mouths gaping aye, to gormandize,
Of young ones clamoring,
And stammering,
With unintelligible cries.
The spider, with but head and feet,
And powerless to compete
With wings so fleet,
Soon saw herself a prey.
The swallow, passing swiftly by,
Bore web and all away,
The spinster dangling in the sky!

Two tables hath our Maker set
For all that in this world are met.
To seats around the first
The skilful, vigilant, and strong are beckoned:
Their hunger and their thirst
The rest must quell with leavings at the second.







THE PARTRIDGE AND THE COCKS.

WITH a set of uncivil and turbulent cocks. That deserved for their noise to be put in the stocks

A partridge was placed to be reared.

Her sex, by politeness revered, . 'Made her hope, from a gentry devoted to love, For the courtesy due to the tenderest dove; Nay, protection chivalric from knights of the yard. That gentry, however, with little regard For the honors and knighthood wherewith they were decked.

And for the strange lady as little respect, Her ladyship often most horribly pecked. At first, she was greatly afflicted therefor, But when she had noticed these madcaps at war With each other, and dealing far bloodier blows, Consoling her own individual woes, — Entailed by their customs, said she, is the shame; Let us pity the simpletons, rather than blame. Our Maker creates not all spirits the same; The cocks and the partridges certainly differ, By a nature than laws of civility stiffer.

Were the choice to be mine, I would finish my life.

In society freer from riot and strife.

But the lord of this soil has a different plan; His tunnel our race to captivity brings, He throws us with cocks, after clipping our wings. 'Tis little we have to complain of but man.





THE COUNTY OF THE STANDARD OF MOTOR OF MALLEY OF MALLEY OF THE STANDARD OF THE

Committee Commit

THE DOG WHOSE EARS WERE CROPPED.

What have I done, I'd like to know, To make my master main me so? A pretty figure I shall cut! From other dogs I'll keep, in kennel shut. Ye kings of beasts, or rather tyrants, ho! Would any beast have served you so? Thus Growler cried, a mastiff young; — The man, whom pity never stung, Went on to prune him of his ears. Though Growler whined about his losses, He found, before the lapse of years, Himself a gainer by the process: For, being by his nature prone To fight his brethren for a bone. He'd oft come back from sad reverse With those appendages the worse. All snarling dogs have ragged ears.

The less of hold for teeth of foe,
The better will the battle go.
When, in a certain place, one fears

The chance of being hurt or beat, He fortifies it from defeat.

Besides the shortness of his ears, See Growler armed against his likes With gorget full of ugly spikes. A wolf would find it quite a puzzle To get a hold about his muzzle.





ille begræn. En ille bo



THE SHEPHERD AND THE KING.

Two demons at their pleasure share our being— The cause of Reason from her homestead fleeing; No heart but on their altars kindleth flames. If you demand their purposes and names, The one is Love, the other is Ambition. Of far the greater share this takes possession,

For even into love it enters,
Which I might prove; but now my story centres
Upon a shepherd clothed with lofty powers:
The tale belongs to older times than ours.

A king observed a flock, wide spread
Upon the plains, most admirably fed,
O'erpaying largely, as returned the years,
Their shepherd's care, by harvests for his shears.
Such pleasure in this man the monarch took,—
Thou meritest, said he, to wield a crook
O'er higher flock than this; and my esteem
O'er men now makes thee judge supreme.

Perhald any sharkard gooleg in hand

Behold our shepherd, scales in hand,
Although a hermit and a wolf or two,
Besides his flock and dogs, were all he knew!
Well stocked with sense, all else upon demand
Would come of course, and did, we understand.

His neighbor hermit came to him to say, Am I awake? Is this no dream, I pray? You favorite! you great! beware of kings;

Their favors are but slippery things, Dear-bought; to mount the heights to which they call, Is but to court a more illustrious fall. You little know to what this lure beguiles. My friend, I say, Beware. The other smiles.

The hermit adds, See how
The court has marred your wisdom even now!
That purblind traveller I seem to see,
Who, having lost his whip, by strange mistake,
Took for a better one a snake;

But, while he thanked his stars, brimful of glee, Outeried a passenger, God shield your breast! Why, man, for life, throw down that treacherous pest,

That snake! — It is my whip. — A snake, I say: What selfish end could prompt my warning, pray? Think you to keep your prize?—And wherefore not?

My whip was worn; I've found another new:

This counsel grave from envy springs in you.—
The stubborn wight would not believe a jot,

Till warm and lithe the serpent grew,
And, striking with his venom, slew
The man almost upon the spot.
And as to you, I dare predict
That something worse will soon afflict.

Indeed? What worse than death, prophetic hermit? Perhaps the compound heartache I may term it.

And never was there truer prophecy.

Full many a courtier pest, by many a lie,

Contrived, and many a cruel slander,

To make the king suspect the judge awry

In both ability and candor.

Cabals were raised, and dark conspiracies, Of men that felt aggrieved by his decrees. With wealth of ours be hath a palace built, Said they. The king, astonished at his guilt,

His ill-got riches asked to see.

He found but mediocrity,

Bespeaking strictest honesty.

So much for his magnificence.

Anon, his plunder was a hoard immense Of precious stones that filled an iron box, All fast secured by half a score of locks. Himself the coffer oped, and sad surprise Befell those manufacturers of lies.

The opened lid disclosed no other matters

Than, first, a shepherd's suit in tatters,

And then a cap and jacket, pipe and crook,

And scrip, mayhap with pebbles from the brook.
 O treasure sweet, said he, that never drew

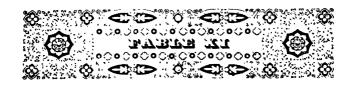
The viper brood of envy's lies on you!

I take you back, and leave this palace splendid, As some roused sleeper doth a dream that's ended.

Forgive me, sire, this exclamation.

In mounting up, my fall I had foreseen, Yet loved the height too well; for who hath been,

Of mortal race, devoid of all ambition?



THE FISHES AND THE SHEPHERD WHO PLAYED THE FLUTE.

THYRSIS — who for his Annette dear Made music with his flute and voice, Which might have roused the dead to hear, And in their silent graves rejoice — Sang once the livelong day, In the flowery month of May, Up and down a meadow brook, While Annette fished with line and hook. But ne'er a fish would bite; So the shepherdess's bait Drew not a fish to its fate. From morning dawn till night. The shepherd, who, by his charming songs, Had drawn savage beasts to him in throngs, And done with them as he pleased to, Thought that he could serve the fish so. O citizens, he sang, of this water, Leave your Naiad in her grot profound; Come and see the blue sky's lovely daughter, Who a thousand times more will charm you; Fear not that her prison will harm you, Though there you should chance to get bound.



CHES . C. . . . A MAY TOOL WERE . MAY POUNT IN THE WORLD AND THE WAY TO THE WORLD AND THE WORLD AND

'Tis only to us men she is cruel:
You she will treat kindly;
A snug little pond she'll find ye,
Clearer than a crystal jewel,
Where you may all live and do well;
Or, if by chance some few
Should find their fate
Concealed in the bait,

The happier still are you; For envied is the death that's met At the hands of sweet Annette.

This cloquence not effecting
The object of his wishes,
Since it failed in collecting
The deaf and dumb fishes,—
His sweet preaching wasted,
His honeyed talk untasted,
A net the shepherd seized, and, pouncing
With a fell scoop at the scaly fry,
He caught them; and now, madly flouncing,

At the feet of his Annette they lie!

O ye shepherds, whose sheep men are,
To trust in reason never dare.
The arts of eloquence sublime
Are not within your calling;
Your fish were caught, from oldest time,
By dint of nets and hauling.





THE TWO PARROTS, THE KING, AND HIS SON.

Two parrots lived, a sire and son,
On roastings from a royal fire.
Two demigods, a son and sire,
These parrots pensioned for their fun.
Time tied the knot of love sincere:
The sires grew to each other dear;
The sons, in spite of their frivolity,
Grew comrades boon, in joke and jollity;
At mess they mated, hot or cool;
Were fellow-scholars at a school,—
Which did the bird no little honor, since
The boy, by king begotten, was a prince.
By nature fond of birds, the prince, too, petted
A sparrow, which delightfully coquetted.

These rivals, both of unripe feather,
One day were frolicking together:
As oft befalls such little folks,
A quarrel followed from their jokes.
The sparrow, quite uncircumspect,
Was by the parrot sadly pecked;
With drooping wing and bloody head,
His master picked him up for dead,



And, being quite too wroth to bear it, In heat of passion killed his parrot.

When this sad piece of news he heard, Distracted was the parent bird. His piercing cries bespoke his pain; But cries and tears were all in vain. The talking bird had left the shore; In short, he, talking now no more, Caused such a rage to seize his sire, That, lighting on the prince in ire, He put out both his eyes,

And fled for safety, as was wise.

The bird a pine for refuge chose, And to its lofty summit rose; There, in the bosom of the skies, Enjoyed his vengeance sweet,

And scorned the wrath beneath his feet. Out ran the king, and cried, in soothing tone, Return, dear friend; what serves it to bemoan?

Hate, vengeance, mourning, let us both omit.

For me, it is no more than fit
To own, though with an aching heart,
The wrong is wholly on our part.
Th' aggressor truly was my son—

My son? no; but by Fate the deed was done.

Ere birth of Time, stern Destiny

Had written down the sad decree, That by this sad calamity

Your child should cease to live, and mine to see.

Stygis natabat jam frigida cymba."—Vino.

Let both, then, cease to mourn;
And you, back to your cage return.
Sire king, replied the bird,
Think you that, after such a deed,
I ought to trust your word?
ou speak of Fate; by such a heathen creed lope you that I shall be enticed to bleed?
But whether Fate or Providence divine

Gives law to things below,
'Tis writ on high, that on this waving pine,
Or where wild forests grow,
My days I finish, safely, far
From that which ought your love to mar,
And turn it all to hate.

Revenge, I know, 's a kingly morsel,
And ever hath been part and parcel
Of this your godlike state.
You would forget the cause of grief;
Suppose I grant you my belief,—
'Tis better still to make it true,
By keeping out of sight of you.
Sire king, my friend, no longer wait
For friendship to be healed;....
But absence is the cure of hate,
As 'tis from love the shield.







THE LIONESS AND THE BEAR.

The lioness had lost her young;
A hunter stole it from the vale;
The forests and the mountains rung
Responsive to her hideous wail.
Nor night, nor charms of sweet repose,
Could still the loud lament that rose
From that grim forest queen.
No animal, as you might think,
With such a noise could sleep a wink.
A bear presumed to intervene.
One word, sweet friend, quoth she,
And that is all, from me.

The young that through your teeth have passed, In file unbroken by a fast,

Had they nor dam nor sire?

They had them both. Then I desire,
Since all their deaths caused no such grievous riot,
While mothers died of grief beneath your fiat,
To know why you yourself cannot be quiet?

I quiet?—I!—a wretch bereaved!
My only son!—such anguish be relieved!

No, never! All for me below
Is but a life of tears and woe!——
But say, why doom yourself to sorrow so?——
Alas! 'tis Destiny that is my foe.

Such language, since the mortal fall,
Has fallen from the lips of all.
Ye human wretches, give your heed;
For your complaints there's little need.
Let him who thinks his own the hardest case,
Some widowed, childless Hecuba behold,
Herself to toil and shame of slavery sold,
And he will own the wealth of heavenly grace.







THE TWO ADVENTURERS AND THE TALISMAN

No flowery path to glory leads. This truth no better voucher needs Than Hercules, of mighty deeds. Few demigods the tomes of fable Reveal to us as being able Such weight of task-work to endure: In history, I find still fewer. One such, however, here behold -A knight by talisman made bold, Within the regions of romance, To seek adventures with the lance. There rode a comrade at his side, 'And as they rode they both espied This writing on a post:— "Would'st see, sir valiant knight, A thing whereof the sight No errant yet can boast? Thou hast this torrent but to ford, And, lifting up alone The elephant of stone Upon its margin shored, Upbear it to the mountain's brow,

Round which, aloft before thee now,

The misty chaplets wreath—
Not stopping once to breathe."
One knight, whose nostrils bled,
Betokening courage fled,
Cried out, What if that current's sweep
Not only rapid be; but deep!
And grant it crossed,—pray, why encumber
One's arms with that unwieldy lumber,

An elephant of stone?

Perhaps the artist may have done
His work in such a way, that one
Might lug it twice its length;
But then to reach you mountain top,
And that without a breathing stop,

Were surely past a mortal's strength—Unless, indeed, it be no bigger
Than some wee, pygmy, dwarfish figure,
Which one would head a cane withal;—
And if to this the case should fall,
The adventure's honor would be small!
This posting seems to me a trap,
Or riddle for some greenish chap;

I therefore leave the whole to you.
The doubtful reasoner onward hies.
With heart resolved, in spite of eyes,
The other boldly dashes through;
Nor depth of flood nor force
Can stop his onward course.
He finds the elephant of stone;

He lifts it all alone;

Without a breathing stop, He bears it to the top Of that steep mount, and seeth there A high-walled city, great and fair. Out-cried the elephant — and hushed; But forth in arms the people rushed. A knight less bold had surely fled; But he, so far from turning back, His course right onward sped, Resolved himself to make attack, And die but with the bravest dead. Amazed was he to hear that band Proclaim him monarch of their land. And welcome him, in place of one Whose death had left a vacant throne! In sooth, he lent a gracious ear, Meanwhile expressing modest fear, Lest such a load of royal care: Should be too great for him to bear. And so, exactly, Sixtus said, When first the pope's tiara pressed his head; (Though, is it such a grievous thing To be a pope, or be a king?) But days were few before they read it That with but little truth he said it.

Blind Fortune follows daring blind.

Oft executes the wisest man,

Ere yet the wisdom of his mind

Is tasked his means or end to scan.



THE RABBITS.

AN ADDRESS TO THE DUKE DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD.

WHILE watching man in all his phases, And seeing that, in many cases,

He acts just like the brute creation,—
I've thought the lord of all these races
Of no less failings showed the traces

Than do his lieges in relation; And that, in making it, Dame Nature Hath put a spice in every creature

From off the self-same spirit-stuff—
Not from the immaterial,
But what we call ethereal,
Refined from matter rough.
An illustration please to hear.
Just on the still frontier

Just on the still frontier
Of either day or night, —
Or when the lord of light
Reclines his radiant head
Upon his watery bed,
Or when he dons the gear,
To drive a new career, —



While yet with doubtful sway The hour is ruled 'twixt night and day, — Some border forest-tree I climb: And, acting Jove, from height sublime My fatal bolt at will directing, I kill some rabbit unsuspecting. The rest that frolicked on the heath, Or browsed the thyme with dainty teeth, With open eye and watchful ear, Behold, all scampering from beneath, Instinct with mortal fear. All, frightened simply by the sound, Hie to their city under ground. But soon the danger is forgot, And just as soon the fear lives not: The rabbits, gayer than before, I see beneath my hand once more!

Are not mankind well pictured here?

By storms asunder driven,

They scarcely reach their haven,

And cast their anchor, ere

They tempt the same dread shocks

Of tempests, waves, and rocks.

True rabbits, back they frisk

To meet the self-same risk!

I add another common case.

When dogs pass through a place

Beyond their customary bounds,
And meet with others, curs or hounds,
Imagine what a holiday!
The native dogs, whose interests centre
In one great organ termed the venter,

The strangers rush at, bite, and bay; With cynic pertness tease and worry, And chase them off their territory. So, too, do men. Wealth, grandeur, glory,

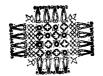
> To men of office or profession, Of every sort, in every nation, As tempting are, and sweet,

As temping are, and sweet,
As is to dogs the refuse meat.
With us, it is a general fact,
One sees the latest-come attacked,

And plundered to the skin. Coquettes and authors we may view,

As samples of the sin;
For woe to belle or writer new!
The fewer eaters round the cake,
The fewer players for the stake,
The surer each one's self to take.
A hundred facts my truth might test;
But shortest works are always best.
In this I but pursue the chart
Laid down by masters of the art;
And, on the best of themes, I hold,
The truth should never all be told.
Hence, here my sermon ought to close.
O thou, to whom my fable owes

Whate'er it has of solid worth, —
Who, great by modesty as well as birth,
Hast ever counted praise a pain, —
Whose leave I could so ill obtain
That here your name, receiving homage,
Should save from every sort of damage
My slender works — which name, well known
To nations, and to ancient Time,
All France delights to own,
Herself more rich in names sublime
Than any other earthly clime; —
Permit me here the world to teach
That you have given my simple rhyme
The text from which it dares to preach.





THE MERCHANT, THE NOBLE, THE SHEPHERD, AND THE KING'S SON.

FOUR voyagers to parts unknown,
On shore, not far from naked, thrown
By furious waves, — a merchant now undone,
A noble, shepherd, and a monarch's son, —
Brought to the lot of Belisarius,*
Their wants supplied on alms precarious.

To tell what fates, and winds, and weather, Had brought these mortals all together, Though from far distant points abscinded, Would make my tale long-winded.

Suffice to say, that, by a fountain met
In council grave, these outcasts held debate.
The prince enlarged, in an oration set,
Upon the miseries that befall the great.

The touching story of the fall of Belisarius, of which painters and poets have made so much, is entirely false, as may be seen by consulting Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," chap. xliii.

^{*} Belisarius was a great general, who, having commanded the armies of the emperor, and lost the favor of his master, fell to such a point of destitution that he asked alms upon the highways. — Note of LA FONTAINE.



The shepherd deemed it best to cast
Off thought of all misfortune past,
And each to do the best he could,
In efforts for the common weal.
Did ever a repining mood,

He added, a misfortune heal? Toil, friends, will take us back to Rome, Or make us here as good a home.

A shepherd so to speak! a shepherd? What!

As though crowned heads were not,
By Heaven's appointment fit,
The sole receptacles of wit!

As though a shepherd could be deeper, In thought or knowledge, than his sheep are! The three, howe'er, at once approved his plan, Wrecked as they were on shores American. I'll teach arithmetic, the merchant said,— Its rules, of course, well seated in his head,—

For monthly pay. The prince replied, And I Will teach political economy.

And I, the noble said, in heraldry Well versed, will open for that branch a school—

As if, beyond a thousand leagues of sea,

That senseless jargon could be fool!

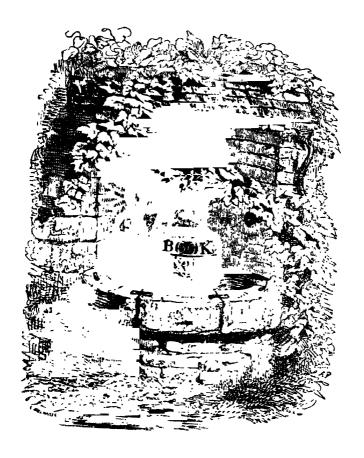
My friends, you talk like men,

The shepherd cried, but then
The month has thirty days; till they are spent,
Are we upon your faith to keep full Lent?

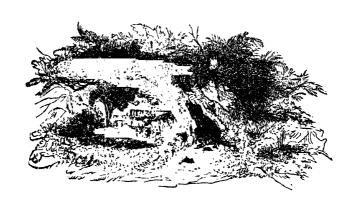
The hope you give is truly good; But, ere it comes, we starve for food! Pray tell me, if you can divine,
On what, to-morrow, we shall dine;
Or tell me, rather, whence we may
Obtain a supper for to-day.
This point, if truth should be confessed,
Is first, and vital to the rest.
Your science short in this respect,
My hands shall cover the defect.—
This said, the nearest woods he sought,
And thence for market fagots brought,
Whose price that day, and eke the next,
Relieved the company perplexed—
Forbidding that, by fasting, they should go
To use their talents in the world below.

We learn, from this adventure's course,
There needs but little skill to get a living.
Thanks to the gifts of Nature's giving,
Our hands are much the readiest resource









PABLE FIRST.

THE LION.



VOL. 11.

оме time ago, a sultan Leopard, By means of many a rich escheat, 'Had many an ox in meadow, sweet, And many a stag in forest, fleet, And (what a savage sort of shepherd!) Full many a sheep upon the plains, That lay within his wide domains. Not far away, one morn, There was a lion born.

Exchanged high compliments of state,
As is the custom with the great,
The sultan called his vizier Fox,
Who had a deeper knowledge-box,
And said to him, This lion's whelp you dread;
What can he do, his father being dead?

Our pity rather let him share,
An orphan so beset with care.
The luckiest lion ever known,
If, letting conquest quite alone,
He should have power to keep his own.

Sir Renard said,

And shook his head, Such orphans, please your majesty,

Will get no pity out of me.

We ought to keep within his favor, Or else with all our might endeavor

To thrust him out of life and throne, Ere yet his claws and teeth are grown.

There's not a moment to be lost.

His horoscope I've cast; He'll never quarrel to his cost;

But then his friendship fast
Will be to friends of greater worth
Than any lion's e'er on earth.
Try then, my liege, to make it ours,
Or else to check his rising powers.

The warning fell in vain.

The sultan slept; and beasts and men
Did so, throughout his whole domain,

Till lion's whelp became a lion.

Then came at once the toesin cry on,
Alarm and fluttering consternation.

The vizier called to consultation,

he vizier called to consultation,

A sigh escaped him as he said,

Why all this mad excitement now,

When hope is fled, no matter how?

A thousand men were useless aid,—

The more, the worse,—since all their power

Would be our mutton to devour.

Appease this lion; sole he doth exceed

The helpers all that on us feed.

And three hath he, that cost him nought—

His courage, strength, and watchful thought.

Quick send a wether for his use:

If not contented, send him more; Yes, add an ox, and see you choose

The best our pastures ever bore.

Thus save the rest.—But such advice
The sultan spurned, as cowardice.
And his, and many states beside,
Did ills, in consequence, betide.
However fought this world allied,
The beast maintained his power and pride.
If you must let the lion grow,
Don't let him live to be your foe.





THE GODS WISHING TO INSTRUCT A SON OF JUPITER.

FOR MONSEIGNEUR THE DUKE DU MAINE.

To Jupiter was born a son, Who, conscious of his origin, A godlike spirit had within. To love, such age is little prone; Yet this celestial boy Made love his chief employ, And was beloved wherever known. In him both love and reason. Sprang up before their season. With charming smiles and manners winning, Had Flora decked his life's beginning, As an Olympian became: Whatever lights the tender flame, -A heart to take and render bliss, — Tears, sighs, in short the whole were his. Jove's son, he should of course inherit A higher and a nobler spirit Than sons of other deities.

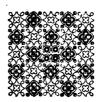


It seemed as if by Memory's aid —
As if a previous life had made
Experiment and hid it —
He plied the lover's hard-learned trade,
So perfectly he did it.
Still Jupiter would educate
In manner fitting to his state.
The gods, obedient to his call,
Assemble in their council-hall:

When thus the sire: Companionless and sole, Thus far the boundless universe I roll; But numerous other offices there are, Of which I give to younger gods the care. I'm now forecasting for this cherished child, Whose countless altars are already piled; To merit such regard from all below, All things the young immortal ought to know.

No sooner had the Thunderer ended,
Than each his godlike plan commended;
Nor did the boy too little yearn
His lesson infinite to learn.
Said fiery Mars, I take the part
To make him master of the art
Whereby so many heroes high
Have won the honors of the sky.
To teach him music be my care,
Apollo said, the wise and fair;
And mine, that mighty god replied,
In the Nemean lion's hide,

To teach him to subdue
The vices, an envenomed crew,
Like Hydras springing ever new.
The foe of weakening luxury,
The boy divine will learn from me
Those rugged paths, so little trod,
That lead to glory man and god.
Said Cupid, when it came his turn,
All things from me the boy may learn.
Well spoke the god of love.
What feat of Mars, or Hercules,
Or bright Apollo, lies above
Wit, winged by a desire to please?







THE FARMER, THE DOG, AND THE FOX.

THE wolf and fox are neighbors strange: I would not build within their range. The fox once eyed with strict regard, From day to day, a poultry-yard; But though a most accomplished cheat. He could not get a fowl to eat. Between the risk and appetite, His rogueship's trouble was not slight. Alas! quoth he, this stupid rabble But mock me with their constant gabble; I go and come, and rack my brains, And get my labor for my pains. Your rustic owner, safe at home, Takes all the profits as they come: He sells his capons and his chicks, ·Or keeps them hanging on his hook, All dressed and ready for his cook; But I, adept in arts and tricks, Should I but catch the toughest crower, Should be brimful of joy, and more. O Jove supreme, why was I made A master of the fox's trade? By all the higher powers and lower, I swear to rob his chicken-grower!

Revolving such revenge within,
When night had stilled the various din,
And poppies seemed to bear full sway
O'er man and dog, as locked they lay
Alike secure in slumber deep,
And cocks and hens were fast asleep,
Upon the populous roost he stole.

By negligence, — a common sin, — The farmer left unclosed the hole,

And, stooping down, the fox went in.
The blood of every fowl was spilled,
The citadel with murder filled.
The dawn disclosed sad sights, I ween,
When heaps on slaughtered heaps were seen,
All weltering in their mingled gore.
With horror stricken, as of yore,
The sun well nigh shrunk back again,
To hide beneath the liquid main.
Such sight once saw the Trojan plain,
When on the fierce Atrides' head

Apollo's awful anger fell,

And strewed the crimson field with dead:

Of Greeks, scarce one was left to tell
The carnage of that night so dread.
Such slaughter, too, around his tent,
The furious Ajax made, one night,

Of sheep and goats, in easy fight;
In anger blindly confident
That by his well-directed blows
Ulysses fell, or some of the

By whose iniquity and lies That wily rival took the prize. The fox, thus having Ajax played, Bore off the nicest of the brood,— As many pullets as he could, — And left the rest, all prostrate laid. The owner found his sole resource His servants and his dog to curse. You useless puppy, better drowned! Why did you not your 'larum sound? Why did you not the evil shun, Quoth Towser, as you might have done? If you, whose interest was more, Could sleep and leave an open door, Think you that I, a dog at best, Would watch, and lose my precious rest? This pithy speech had been, in truth, Good logic in a master's mouth: But, coming from a menial's lip, It even lacked the lawyership To save poor Towser from the whip.

O thou who head'st a family,
(An honor never grudged by me,)
Thou art a patriarch unwise,
To sleep, and trust another's eyes.
Thyself shouldst go to bed the last,
Thy doors all seen to, shut, and fast.
I charge you never let a fox see
Your special business done by proxy.



THE MOGUL'S DREAM.

Long since, a Mogul saw, in dream,
A vizier in Elysian bliss;
No higher joy could be or seem,
Or purer, than was ever his.
Elsewhere was dreamed of by the same
A wretched hermit wrapped in flame,
Whose lot e'en touched, so pained was he,
The partners of his misery.
Was Minos mocked? or had these ghosts,
By some mistake, exchanged their posts?
Surprise at this the vision broke;
The dreamer suddenly awoke.

Some mystery suspecting in it,
He got a wise one to explain it.
Replied the sage interpreter,
Let not the thing a marvel seem:
There is a meaning in your dream:

If I have aught of knowledge, sir, It covers counsel from the gods. While tenanting these clay abodes, This vizier sometimes gladly sought The solitude that favors thought;



The Boke on the three states and along of

Whereas, the hermit, in his cot, Had longings for a vizier's lot. To this interpretation dared I add,

The love of solitude I would inspire.

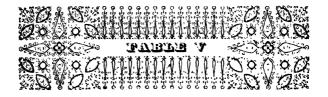
It satisfies the heart's desire
With unencumbered gifts and glad—
Heaven-planted joys, of stingless sweet,
Aye springing up beneath our feet.

O Solitude, whose secret charms I know— Retreats that I have loved—when shall I go To taste, far from a world of din and noise, Your shades so fresh, where silence has a voice? When shall their soothing gloom my refuge be?

When shall the sacred Nine, from courts afar,

And cities with all solitude at war,
Engross entire, and teach their votary
The stealthy movements of the spangled nights,
The names and virtues of those errant lights
Which rule o'er human character and fate?
Or, if not born to purposes so great,
The streams, at least, shall win my heartfelt thanks,
While, in my verse, I paint their flowery banks.
Fate shall not weave my life with golden thread,
Nor 'neath rich fret-work, on a purple bed,
Shall I repose, full late, my care-worn head.

But will my sleep be less a treasure?
Less deep, thereby, and full of pleasure?
I vow it, sweet and gentle as the dew,
Within those deserts sacrifices new;
And when the time shall come to yield my breath,
Without remorse I'll join the ranks of Death.



THE LION, THE MONKEY, AND THE TWO ASSES.

The lion, for his kingdom's sake, In morals would some lessons take, And therefore called, one summer's day, The monkey, master of the arts, An animal of brilliant parts,

To hear what he could say.

Great king, the monkey thus began,
To reign upon the wisest plan
Requires a prince to set his zeal,
And passion for the public weal,
Distinctly and quite high above
A certain feeling called self-love,

The parent of all vices,

In creatures of all sizes.

To will this feeling from one's breast away,

Is not the easy labor of a day;
'Tis much to moderate its tyrant sway.

By that your majesty august
Will execute your royal trust
From folly free and aught unjust.
Give me, replied the king,
Example of each thing.



Each species, said the sage,—
And I begin with ours,—
Exalts its own peculiar powers
Above sound reason's gauge.
Meanwhile, all other kinds and tribes
As fools and blockheads it describes,
With other compliments as cheap.

But, on the other hand, the same
Self-love inspires a beast to heap
The highest pyramid of fame
For every one that bears his name;
Because he justly deems such praise
The easiest way himself to raise.
'Tis my conclusion in the case,

That many a talent here below Is but cabal, or sheer grimace,—

The art of seeming things to know—An art in which perfection lies

More with the ignorant than wise.

Two asses tracking, t'other day,
Of which each in his turn
Did incense to the other burn,
Quite in the usual way,—
I heard one to his comrade say,
My lord, do you not find
The prince of knaves and fools
To be this man, who boasts of mind
Instructed in his schools?

With wit unseemly and profane,

He mocks our venerable race —
On each of his who lacketh brain
Bestows our ancient surname, ass!
And, with abusive tongue portraying,
Describes our laugh and talk as braying!
These bipeds of their folly tell us,
While thus pretending to excel us.

No, 'tis for you to speak, my friend, And let their orators attend.

The braying is their own, but let them be: We understand each other, and agree,

And that's enough. As for your song, Such wonders to its notes belong, The nightingale is put to shame, And Lambert loses half his fame. My lord, the other ass replied, Such talents in yourself reside, Of asses all, the joy and pride. These donkies, not quite satisfied With scratching thus each other's hide,

Must needs the cities visit,
Their fortunes there to raise,
By sounding forth the praise,
Each, of the other's skill exquisite.

Full many, in this age of ours, —

Not only among asses, But in the higher classes,

Whom Heaven hath clothed with higher powers,-

Dared they but do it, would exalt
A simple innocence from fault,
Or virtue common and domestic,
To excellence majestic.

I've said too much, perhaps; but I suppose Your majesty the secret won't disclose, Since 'twas your majesty's request that I

This matter should exemplify. How love of self gives food to ridicule, I've shown. To prove the balance of my rule, That justice is a sufferer thereby,

A longer time will take.—
'Twas thus the monkey spake.
But my informant does not state,
That e'er the sage did demonstrate
The other point, more delicate.
Perhaps he thought none but a fool
A lion would too strictly school.



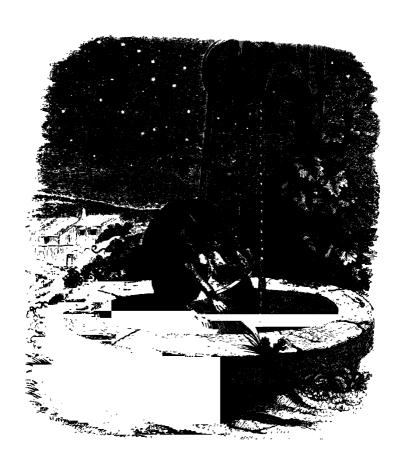


THE WOLF AND THE FOX.

Why Æsop gave the palm of cunning,
O'er flying animals and running,
To Renard Fox, I cannot tell,
Though I have searched the subject well.
Hath not Sir Wolf an equal skill
Instricks and artifices shown,
When he would do some life an ill,
Or from his foes defend his own?
I think he hath; and, void of disrespect,
I might, perhaps, my master contradict:
Yet here's a case in which the burrow-lodger
Was palpably, I own, the brightest dodger.
One night he spied within a well,
Wherein the fullest moonlight fell,
What seemed to him an ample cheese.

When drawers thence would fill their urns.
Our fox went down in one of these,
By hunger greatly pressed to sup,
'And drew the other empty up.

Two balanced buckets took their turns



Convinced at once of his mistake,
And anxious for his safety's sake,
He saw his death was near and sure,
Unless some other wretch in need
The same moon's image should allure
To take a bucket and succeed
To his predicament, indeed.

Two days passed by, and none approached the well;
Unhalting Time, as is his wont,
Was scooping from the moon's full front,
And, as he scooped, Sir Renard's courage fell.

His crony wolf, of clamorous maw,
Poor fox at last above him saw,
And cried, My comrade, look you here!
See what abundance of good cheer!
A cheese of most delicious zest!
Which Faunus must himself have pressed,
Of milk by heifer lo given.
If Jupiter were sick in heaven,
The taste would bring his appetite.
Eve taken, as you see, a bite;
But still for both there is a plenty.

Pray take the bucket that I've sent ye;
Come down, and get your share.
Although, to make the story fair,
The fox had used his utmost care,
The wolf (a fool to give him credit)
Went down because his stomach bid it—

And by his weight pulled up Sir Renard to the top. We need not mock this simpleton, For we ourselves such deeds have done. Our faith is prone to lend its ear To aught which we desire or fear.







THE PEASANT OF THE DANUBE.

To judge no man by outside view, Is good advice, though not quite new. Some time ago, a mouse's fright Upon this moral shed some light. I have for proof at present, With Æsop and good Socrates, Of Danube's banks a certain peasant, Whose portrait, drawn to life, one sees, By Marc Aurelius, if you please. The first are well known, far and near I briefly sketch the other here. The crop upon his fertile chin Was any thing but soft or thin; Indeed, his person, clothed in hair, Might personate an unlicked bear. Beneath his matted brow there lay An eye that squinted every way; crooked nose and monstrous lips he bore, And goat-skin round his trunk he wore, With bulrush belt. And such a man as this is

Was delegate from towns the Danube kisses,

When not a nook on earth there lingered By Roman avarice not fingered.

Before the senate thus he spoke:—
Romans and senators who hear.

I, first of all, the gods invoke,

The powers whom mortals justly fear,
That from my tongue there may not fall
A word which I may need recall.
Without their aid, there enters nought

To human hearts of good or just:

Whoever leaves the same unsought,

Is prone to violate his trust; The prey of Roman avarice, Ourselves are witnesses of this.

Rome, by our crimes, our scourge has grown,

More than by valor of her own.

Romans, beware lest Heaven, some day,

Exact for all our groans the pay, And, arming us, by just reverse,

To do its vengeance, stern, but meet, Shall pour on you the vassals' curse,

And place your necks beneath our feet!

And wherefore not? For, are you better

Than hundreds of the tribes diverse Who clank the galling Roman fetter?

What right gives you the universe?

Why come and mar our quiet life?

We tilled our acres free from strife; In arts our hands were skilled to toil,

As well as o'er the generous soil.

What have you taught the Germans brave? Apt scholars, had but they Your appetite for sway, They might, instead of you, enslave, Without your inhumanity. That which your prætors perpetrate On us, as subjects of your state, My powers would fail me to relate. Profaned their altars and their rites, The pity of your gods our lot excites. Thanks to your representatives, In you they see but shameless thieves, Who plunder gods as well as men, By sateless avarice insane. The men that rule our land from this Are like the bottomless abyss. To satisfy their lust of gain, Both man and nature toil in vain. Recall them: for indeed we will Our fields for such no longer till. From all our towns and plains we fly For refuge to our mountains high. We guit our homes and tender wives, To lead with savage beasts our lives — No more to welcome into day A progeny for Rome a prey. And as to those already born — Poor, helpless babes forforn! — We wish them short career in time. Your prætors force us to the crime.

Are they our teachers? Call them home,—
They teach but luxury and vice,—
Lest Germans should their likes become,
In fell, remorseless avarice.
Have we a remedy at Rome?
I'll tell you here how matters go.
Hath one no present to bestow,
No purple for a judge or so,
The laws for him are deaf and dumb;
Their minister has aye in store
A thousand hindrances or more.
I'm sensible that truths like these
Are not the things to please.
I've done. Let death avenge you here
Of my complaint, a little too sincere.

He said no more; but all admired
The thought with which his speech was fired;
The eloquence and heart of oak
With which the prostrate savage spoke.
Indeed, so much were all delighted,
As due revenge, the man was knighted.
The prætors were at once displaced,
And better men the office graced.
The senate, also, by decree,
Besought a copy of the speech,
Which might to future speakers be
A model for the use of each.
Not long, howe'er, had Rome the sense

To entertain such eloquence.





THE OLD MAN AND THE THREE YOUNG ONES.

A MAN was planting at fourscore.
Three striplings, who their satchels wore,
In building, cried, the sense were more;
But then to plant young trees at that age!
The man is surely in his dotage.

Pray, in the name of common sense,
What fruit can he expect to gather
Of all this labor and expense?
Why, he must live like Lamech's father!
What use for thee, gray-headed man,
To load the remnant of thy span
With care for days that never can be thine?
Thyself to thought of errors past resign.

Long-growing hope, and lofty plan, Leave thou to us, to whom such things belong. To you! replied the old man hale and strong; I dare pronounce you altogether wrong.

The settled part of man's estate
Is very brief, and comes full late.
To those pale, gaming sisters trine,
Your lives are stakes as well as mine.
While so uncertain is the sequel,
Our terms of future life are equal;

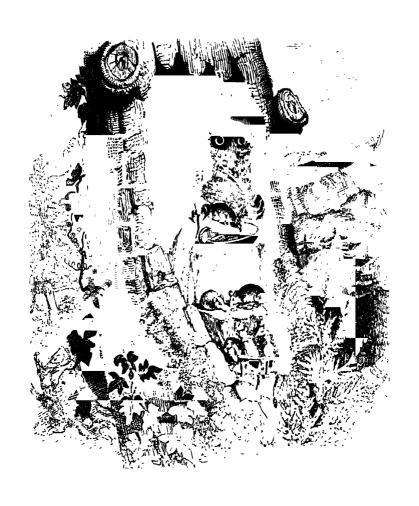
For none can tell who last shall close his eyes
Upon the glories of these azure skies;
Nor any moment give us, ere it flies,
Assurance that another such shall rise.
But my descendants, whosoe'er they be,
Shall owe these cooling fruits and shades to me.
Do you acquit yourselves, in wisdom's sight,
From ministering to other hearts delight?
Why, boys, this is the fruit I gather now;
And sweeter never blushed on bended bough.
Of this, to-morrow I may take my fill;
Indeed, I may enjoy its sweetness till
I see full many mornings chase the glooms
From off the marble of your youthful tombs.
The gray-beard man was right. One of the three,

Embarking, foreign lands to see,
Was drowned within the very port.
In quest of dignity at court,
Another met his country's foe,
And perished by a random blow.

The third was killed by falling from a tree Which he himself would graft. The three Were mourned by him of hoary head,

Who chiscled on each monument —
On doing good intent —
The things which we have said.





TO BE INCOMED BY DUTY CHILARS OF AND



THE MICE AND THE OWL.

Beware of saying, Lend an ear
To something marvellous or witty.
To disappoint your friends who hear,
Is possible, and were a pity.
But now a clear exception see,
Which I maintain a prodigy—

Which I maintain a prodigy — A thing which, with the air of fable, Is true as is the interest table.

A pine was by a woodman felled, Which ancient, huge, and hollow tree An owl had for his palace held—

. A bird the Fates had kept in fee, Interpreter to such as we.

Within the caverns of the pine,
With other tenants of that mine,
Were found full many footless mice,
But well provisioned, fat, and nice.
The bird had bit off all their feet,
And fed them there with heaps of wheat.

vод п. 3

That this owl reasoned, who can doubt?
When to the chase he first went out,
And home alive the vermin brought,
Which in his talons he had caught,
The nimble creatures ran away.
Next time, resolved to make them stay,
e cropped their legs, and found, with pleasure.

He cropped their legs, and found, with pleasure, That he could eat them at his leisure;

It were impossible to eat
Them all at once, did health permit.
His foresight equal to our own,
In furnishing their food, was shown.
Now, let Cartesians, if they can,

Pronounce this owl a mere machine.

Could springs originate the plan
Of maiming mice, when taken lean,

To fatten for his soup-tureen? If reason did no service there,

I do not know it any where.

Observe the course of argument:
These vermin are no sooner caught than gone:

They must be used as soon, 'tis evident;

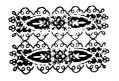
But this to all cannot be done.

And then, for future need,
I might as well take heed.
Hence, while their ribs I lard,
I must from their elopement guard.

But how? — A plan complete! — I'll clip them of their feet!

Now, find me, in your human schools,
A better use of logic's tools!
Upon your faith, what different art of thought
Has Aristotle or his followers taught?*

* La Fontaine, in a note, asserts that the subject of this fable, however marvellous, was a fact which was actually observed. His commenta ors, however, think the observers must have been in some measure mistaken, and I agree with them.— ED.





'Tis thus, by crystal fount, my muse hath sung,
 Translating into heavenly tongue
 Whatever came within my reach,
From hosts of beings borrowing nature's speech.
 Interpreter of tribes diverse,
I've made them actors on my motley stage;
 For in this boundless universe
There's none but talketh, simpleton or sage.
More eloquent at home than in my verse,
If some should find themselves by me the worse,
And this my work prove not a model true,

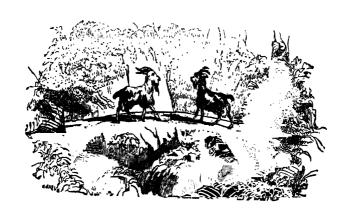
To that which I at least rough-hew Succeeding hands will give the finish due.

Ye pets of those sweet sisters nine,
Complete the task that I resign;
The lessons give, which doubtless I've omitted,
With wings by these inventions nicely fitted. 'But you're already more than occupied;
For while my muse her harmless work hath plied,

All Europe to our sovereign yields,
And learns, upon her battle-fields,
To bow before the noblest plan
That ever monarch formed, or man.
Thence draw those sisters themes sublime,
With power to conquer Fate and Time.







PABLE FIRST.

THE COMPANIONS OF ULYSSES.

'TO MONSEIGNEUR THE DUKE DE BOURGOGNE.



EAR prince, a special favorite of the skies,
Pray let my incense from your altars rise.
With these her gifts if rather late my muse,
My age and labors must her fault excuse.
My spirit wanes, while yours beams on the sight
At every moment with augmented light:
It does not go, — it runs, — it seems to fly;
And he from whom it draws its traits so high,

In war a hero, burns to do the same.

No lack of his that, with victorious force,
His giant strides mark not his glory's course:
Some god retains: our sovereign I might name;
Himself no less than conqueror divine,
Whom one short month made master of the Rhine.
It needed then upon the foe to dash;
Perhaps, to-day, such generalship were rash.
But hush, — they say the Loves and Smiles
Abhor a speech spun out in miles;

And of such deities your court Is constantly composed, in short. Not but that other gods, as meet, There hold the highest seat;

For, free and lawless as the rest may seem, Good Sense and Reason bear a sway supreme.

> Consult these last about the case Of certain men of Grecian race, Who, most unwise and indiscreet, Imbibed such draughts of poison sweet, As changed their form and brutified.

Ten years the heroes at Ulysses' side Had been the sport of wind and tide.

At last those powers of water

The sca-worn wanderers bore.

To that enchanted shore

Where Circe reigned, Apollo's daughter.
She pressed upon their thirsty lips
Delicious drink, but full of bane:

Their reason, at the first light sips, Laid down the sceptre of its reign.

Then took their forms and features
The lineaments of various creatures.
To bears and lious some did pass,
Or elephants, of ponderous mass;
While not a few, I ween,
In smaller forms were seen,—
In such, for instance, as the mole.
Of all, the sage Ulysses sole
Had wit to shun that treacherous bowl.
With wisdom, and heroic mien,
And fine address, he caused the queen
To swallow, on her wizard throne,
A poison somewhat like her own.

A goddess, she to speak her wishes dared, And hence, at once, her love declared.

Ulysses, truly too judicious

To lose a moment so propitious, Besought that Circe would restore

His Greeks the shapes that first they wore. Replied the nymph, But will they take them back?

Go make the proffer to the motley pack.

Ulysses ran, both glad and sure:
That poisonous cup, cried he, hath yet its cure;
And here I bring what ends your shame and pain.

Will you, dear friends, be men again?
Pray speak, for speech is now restored.
No, said the lion, — and he roared, —
My head is not so void of brains!
Renounce shall I my royal gains?
Pve claws and teeth, to tear my foes to bits,

And more than that, I'm king.

Am I such gifts away to fling,

To be but one of Ithaca's mere cits?

In rank and file perhaps I might bear arms.

In such a change I see no charms. — Ulysses passes to the bear: —

How changed, my friend, from what you were! How sightly once, how ugly now!

> Humph! truly, how?— Growled Bruin, in his way—

How else than as a bear should be, I pray? Who taught your stilted highness to prefer

One form to every other, sir?

Doth yours possess peculiar powers

The merits to decide, of ours?

With all respect, I shall appeal my case To some sweet beauty of the bearish race. Please pass it by, if you dislike my face.

I live content and free from care;
And, well remembering what we were,
I say it, plain and flat,
I'll change to no such state as that.
Next to the wolf the princely Greek
With flattering hope began to speak:—
Comrade, I blush, I must confess,
To hear a gentle shepherdess

Complaining to the echoing rocks
Of that outrageous appetite
Which drives you, night by night,
To prey upon her flocks.

You had been proud to guard her fold
In your more honest life of old.
Pray quit this wolfship, now you can,
And leave the woods an honest man.
But is there one? the wolf replied:
Such man, I own, I never spied.
You treat me as a ravenous beast,
But what are you? To say the least,
You would yourself have eat the sheep,
Which, eat by me, the village weep.
Now, truly on your faith confess,
Should I, as man, love flesh the less?
Why, man, not seldom, kills his very brother;
What, then, are you but wolves to one another?
Now, every thing with care to scan,

And rogue with rogue to rate,
I'd better be a wolf than man,
And need not change my state.
Thus all did wise Ulysses try,

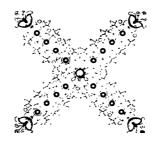
And got from all the same reply,

As well from great as small.
Wild liberty was dear to all;
To follow lawless appetite
They counted their supreme delight.
All banished from their thought and care
The glorious praise of actions fair.

Where passion led, they thought their course was free; Self-bound, their chains they could not see.

Prince, I had wished for you a theme to choose, Where I might mingle pleasantry with use;

And I should meet with your approving voice,
No doubt, if I could make such choice.
At last, Ulysses' crew
Were offered to my view.
And there are like them not a few,
Who may for penalty await
Your censure and your hate.







THE CAT AND THE TWO SPARROWS.

TO MONSEIGNEUR THE DUKE DE BOURGOGNE.

CONTEMPORARY with a sparrow tame There lived a cat; from tenderest age, Of both, the basket and the cage

Had household gods the same.

The bird's sharp beak full oft provoked the cat,
Who played in turn, but with a gentle pat,
His wee friend sparing with a merry laugh,
Not punishing his faults by half.

In short, he scrupled much the harm,
Should he with points his ferule arm.
The sparrow, less discreet than he,
With dagger beak made very free.
Sir Cat, a person wise and staid,
Excused the warmth with which he played;
For 'tis full half of friendship's art
To take no joke in serious part.
Familiar since they saw the light,
Mere habit kept their friendship good;
Fair play had never turned to fight,
Till, of their neighborhood,

Another sparrow came to greet Old Ratto grave and saucy Pete. Between the birds a quarrel rose, And Ratto took his side.

A pretty stranger, with such blows
To beat our friend! he cried.
A neighbor's sparrow eating ours!
Not so, by all the feline powers.
And quick the stranger he devours.
Now truly saith Sir Cat

Now, truly, saith Sir Cat,
I know how sparrows taste by that.
Exquisite, tender, delicate!
This thought soon sealed the other's fate.
But hence what moral can I bring?
For, lacking that important thing,
A fable lacks its finishing.
I seem to see of one some trace,
But still its shadow mocks my chase.
Yours, prince, it will not thus abuse:
For you such sports, and not my muse.
In wit, she and her sisters eight
Would fail to match you with a mate.







THE MISER AND THE MONKEY.

A MAN amassed. The thing we know Doth often to a frenzy grow. No thought had he but of his minted gold— Stuff void of worth when unemployed, I hold. Now, that this treasure might the safer be,

Our miser's dwelling had the sea As guard on every side from every thief. With pleasure very small in my belief,

But very great in his, he there Upon his hoard bestowed his care.

No respite came of everlasting
Recounting, calculating, casting;
For some mistake would always come
To mar and spoil the total sum.
A monkey there, of goodly size,—
And than his lord, I think, more wise,—
Some doubloons from the window threw,
And rendered thus the count untrue.

The padlocked room permitted
Its owner, when he quitted,
To leave his money on the table.
One day, bethought this monkey wise
To make the whole a sacrifice
To Neptune on his throne unstable.
I could not well award the prize

Between the monkey's and the miser's pleasure
Derived from that devoted treasure.
With some, Don Bertrand would the honor gain,
For reasons it were tedious to explain.

One day, then, left alone,
That animal, to mischief prone,
Coin after coin detached,
A gold jacobus snatched,
Or Portuguese doubloon,
Or silver ducatoon,
Or noble, of the English rose,
And flung with all his might
Those discs, which oft excite
The strongest wishes mortal ever knows.

Had he not heard, at last,
The turning of his master's key,
The money all had passed
The same short road to sea;
And not a single coin but had been pitched
Into the gulf by many a wreck enriched.

Now, God preserve full many a financier Whose use of wealth may find its likeness here.







THE TWO GOATS.

Since goats have browsed, by freedom fired, To follow fortune they've aspired. To pasturage they're wont to roam Where men are least disposed to come. If any pathless place there be,

Or cliff, or pendent precipice,
'Tis there they cut their capers free:
There's nought can stop these dames, I wis.

Two goats, thus self-emancipated,— The white that on their feet they wore Looked back to noble blood of yore,—

Once quit the lowly meadows, sated, And sought the hills, as it would seem:

In search of luck, by luck they met Each other at a mountain stream.

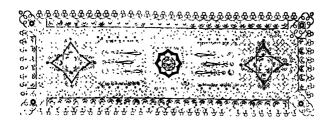
As bridge a narrow plank was set, On which, if truth must be confest, Two weasels scarce could go abreast. And then the torrent, foaming white, As down it tumbled from the height, Might well those Amazons affright. But maugre such a fearful rapid, Both took the bridge, the goats intrenid!

I seem to see our Louis Grand
And Philip IV. advance
To the Isle of Conference,
That lies 'twixt Spain and France,
Each sturdy for his glorious land.
Thus each of our adventurers goes,
Till foot to foot, and nose to nose,
Somewhere about the midst they meet,
And neither will an inch retreat.

For why? they both enjoyed the glory Of ancestors in ancient story.

The one, a goat of peerless rank
Which, browsing on Sicilian bank,
The Cyclop gave to Galatæa;
The other famous Amalthæa,
The goat that suckled Jupiter,
As some historians aver.
For want of giving back, in troth,
A common fall involved them both—
A common accident, no doubt,
On Fortune's changeful route.





TO MONSEIGNEUR THE DUKE DE BOURGOGNE.

WHO HAD REQUESTED OF M. DE LA FONTAINE A FABLE WHICH SHOULD BE CALLED "THE CAT AND THE MOUSE."

To please a youthful prince, whom Fame
A temple in my writings vows,
What fable answers to the name,
"The Cat and Mouse?"

Shall I in verse the fair present,
With softest look but hard intent,
Who serves the hearts her charms entice
As does the cat its captive mice?
Or make my subject Fortune's sport?
She treats the friends that make her court,
And follow closest her advice,
As treats the cat the silly mice.

Shall I for theme a king select
Who sole, of all her favorites,
Commands the goddess's respect?
For whom she from her wheel alights?

Who, never stayed by foes a trice,
Whene'er they block his way,
Can with the strongest play
As doth the cat with mice?

Insensibly, while casting thus about,
Quite anxious for my subject's sake,
A theme I meet, and, if I don't mistake,
Shall spoil it, too, by spinning out.
The prince will treat my muse, for that,
As mice are treated by the cat.







THE OLD CAT AND THE YOUNG MOUSE.

A young and inexperienced mouse Had faith to try a veteran cat, — Raminagrobis, death to rat, And scourge of vermin through the house, — Appealing to his elemency With reasons sound and fair. Pray let me live; a mouse like me It were not much to spare. Am I, in such a family, A burden? Would my largest wish Our wealthy host impoverish? A grain of wheat will make my meal; A nut will fat me like a seal. I'm lean at present: please to wait, And for your heirs reser my fate. The captive mouse thus spake. Replied the captor, You mistake; To me shall such a thing be said?

Why, such a thing I never knew.
Thou victim of my paw,
By well-established law,

Address the deaf! address the dead!

A cat to pardon! — old one, too!

Die, as a mousling should,
And beg the sisterhood,
Who ply the thread and shears,
To lend thy speech their ears.
Some other like repast
My heirs may find, or fast.
He ceased. The moral's plain.
Youth always hopes its ends to gain,
Believes all spirits like its own:
Old age is not to mercy prone.

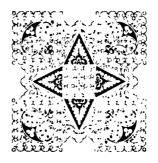






THE SICK STAG.

A stag, where stags abounded, Fell sick, and was surrounded Forthwith by comrades kind, All pressing to assist, Or see, their friend, at least, And ease his anxious mind -An irksome multitude. Ah, sirs! the sick was fain to cry, Pray leave me here to die, As others do, in solitude. Pray, let your kind attentions cease, Till death my spirit shall release. But comforters are not so sent: On duty sad full long intent, When Heaven pleased, they went, But not without a friendly glass; That is to say, they cropped the grass And leaves which in that quarter grew, From which the sick his pittance drew. By kindness thus compelled to fast, He died for want of food at last. The men take off no trifling dole Who heal the body or the soul. Alas the times! do what we will, They have their payment, cure or kill.







THE BAT, THE BUSH, AND THE DUCK.

A Bush, duck, and bat, having found that in trade Confined to their country small profits were made, Into partnership entered to traffic abroad, Their purse, held in common, well guarded from fraud.

Their factors and agents, these trading allies
Employed where they needed, as cautious as wise:
Their journals and legers, exact and discreet,
Recorded by items expense and receipt.
All throve, till an argosy, on its way home,
With a cargo worth more than their capital sum,
In attempting to pass through a dangerous strait,
Went down with its passengers, sailors, and freight,
To enrich those enormous and miserly stores,
From Tartarus distant but very few doors.
Regret was a thing which the firm could but feel;
Regret was the thing they were slow to reveal;
For the least of a merchant well knows that the
weal

Of his credit requires him his loss to conceal. But that which our trio unluckily suffered Allowed no repair, and of course was discovered. No money nor credit, 'twas plain to be seen Their heads were now threatened with bonnets of green*;

And, the facts of the case being every where known. No mortal would open his purse with a loan.

Debts, bailiffs, and lawsuits, and creditors gruff,
At the crack of day knocking,
(Importunity shocking!)

Our trio kept busy enough.

The bush, ever ready and on the alert,

Now caught all the people it could by the skirt:—

Pray, sir, be so good as to tell, if you please,

If you know whereabout the old villanous seas

Have hid all our goods which they stole t'other

night.

The diver, to seek them, went down out of sight. The bat didn't venture abroad in the day, And thus of the bailiffs kept out of the way.

Full many insolvents, not bats, to hide so,
Nor bushes, nor divers, I happen to know,
But even grand seigniors, quite free from all cares,
By virtue of brass, and of private backstairs.

^{*} Such as insolvent debtors were anciently required to wear, in France, after making cession of their effects, in order to escape imprisonment. — Ep.







THE QUARREL OF THE DOGS AND CATS, AND THAT OF THE CATS AND MICE.

ENTHRONED by an eternal law, Hath Discord reigned throughout the universe. In proof, I might from this our planet draw A thousand instances diverse. Within the circle of our view. This queen hath subjects not a few. Beginning with the elements, It is astonishing to see How they have stood, to all intents, As wrestlers from eternity. Besides these four great potentates, Old stubborn earth, fire, flood, and air, How many other smaller states Are waging everlasting war! In mansion decked with frieze and column. Dwelt dogs and cats in multitudes; Decrees, promulged in manner solemn, Had pacified their ancient feuds. Their lord had so arranged their meals and labors, And threatened quarrels with the whip, That, living in sweet cousinship They edified their wondering neighbors.

At last, some dainty plate to lick,
Or profitable bone to pick,
Bestowed by some partiality,
Broke up the smooth equality.
The side neglected were indignant
At such a slight malignant.

Some writers make the whole dispute begin With favors to a bitch while lying in.

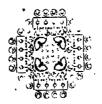
Whate'er the cause, the altercation Soon grew a perfect conflagration. In hall and kitchen, dog and cat Took sides with zeal for this or that.

New rules upon the cat side falling
Produced tremendous caterwauling.
Their advocate, against such rules as these,
Advised recurrence to the old decrees.
They searched in vain, for, hidden in a nook,
The thievish mice had eaten up the book.

Another quarrel, in a trice,
Made many sufferers with the mice;
For many a veteran whiskered-face,
With craft and cunning richly stored,
And grudges old against the race,
Now watched to put them to the sword;
Nor mourned for this that mansion's lord.

Resuming our discourse, we see No creature from opponents free. 'Tis nature's law for earth and sky; 'Twere vain to ask the reason why; God's works are good,—I cannot doubt it,—
And that is all I know about it.

I know, however, that the cause
Which hath our human quarrels brought,
Three quarters of the time, is nought
That will be, is, or ever was.
Ye veterans, in state and church,
At threescore years, indeed,
It seems there still is need
To give you lessons with the birch!





THE WOLF AND THE FOX.

Whence comes it that there liveth not A man contented with his lot? Here's one who would a soldier be, Whom soldiers all with envy see.

A fox to be a wolf once sighed. With disappointments mortified, Who knows but that, his wolfship cheap, The wolf himself would be a sheep?

I marvel that a prince is able,
At eight, to put the thing in fable;
While I, beneath my seventy snows,
Forge out, with toil and time,
The same in labored rhyme,
Less striking than his prose.

The traits which in his work we meet,

A poet, it must be confessed,

Could not have half so well expressed:

He bears the palm as more complete.



Tis mine to sing it to the pipe;
But I expect that when the sands
Of Time have made my hero ripe,
He'll put a trumpet in my hands.

My mind but little doth aspire
To prophecy; but yet it reads
On high, that soon his glorious deeds
Full many Homers will require—
Of which this age produces few.
But, bidding mysteries adieu,
I try my powers upon this fable new.

Dear wolf, complained a hungry fox,
A lean chick's meat, or veteran cock's,
Is all I get by toil or trick:
Of such a living I am sick.
With far less risk, you've better cheer;
A house you need not venture near,
But I must do it, spite of fear.
Pray, make me master of your trade,
And let me by that means be made
The first of all my race that took
Fat mutton to his larder's hook:
Your kindness shall not be repented.
The wolf quite readily consented.
I have a brother, lately dead;
Go fit his skin to yours, he said.

'Twas done; and then the wolf proceeded:
Now mark you well what must be done,
The dogs that guard the flock to shun.

The fox the lessons strictly heeded.

At first, he boggled, in his dress; But awkwardness grew less and less,

Till perseverance gave success.

His education scarce complete,

A flock, his scholarship to greet,

Came rambling out that way. The new-made wolf his work began,

Amidst the heedless nibblers ran,

And spread a sore dismay.

Such terror did Patroclus spread,

When on the Trojan camp and town,

Clad in Achilles' armor dread,

He valiantly came down.

The matrons, maids, and aged men

All hurried to the temples then. —

The bleating host now surely thought

That fifty wolves were on the spot:

Dog, shepherd, sheep, all homeward fled, And left a single sheep in pawn,

Which Renard seized when they were gone.

But, ere upon his prize he fed,

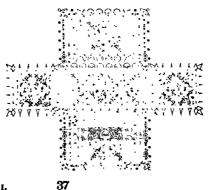
There crowed a cock near by, and down

The scholar threw his prey and gown, That he might run that way the faster —

Forgetting lessons, prize, and master

How useless is the art of seeming!
Reality, in every station,
Is through its cloak at all times gleaming,
And bursting out on fit occasion.

Young prince, to your unrivalled wit, My muse gives credit, as is fit, For what she here hath labored with – The subject, characters, and pith.



VOL. II.



THE LOBSTER AND HER DAUGHTER.

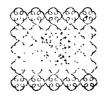
THE wise, sometimes, as lobsters do, To gain their ends, back foremost go. It is the rower's art; and those Commanders who mislead their foes, Do often seem to aim their sight Just where they don't intend to smite. My theme, so low, may yet apply To one whose fame is very high, Who finds it not the hardest matter A hundred-headed league to scatter. What he will do, what leave undone, Are secrets with unbroken seals, Till victory the truth reveals. Whatever he would have unknown Is sought in vain. Decrees of Fate Forbid to check, at first, the course Which sweeps at last with torrent force. One Jove, as ancient fables state, Exceeds a hundred gods in weight. So Fate and Louis would seem able The universe to draw, Bound captive to their law. — But come we to our fable.



A mother lobster did her daughter chide:
For shame, my daughter! can't you go ahead?
And how go you yourself, the child replied;
Can I be but by your example led?
Head foremost should I, singularly, wend,
While all my race pursue the other end?
She spoke with sense: for better or for worse,
Example has a universal force.

To some it opens wisdom's door, But leads to folly many more. Yet, as for backing to one's aim, When properly pursued

The art is doubtless good,
At least in grim Bellona's game.



Ó

THE EAGLE AND THE MAGPIE.

THE eagle, through the air a queen, And one far different, I ween, In temper, language, thought, and mien,— The magpie, — once a prairie crossed. The by-path where they met was drear, And Madge gave up herself for lost; But, having dined on ample cheer, The eagle bade her, Never fear; You're welcome to my company; For if the king of gods can be Full oft in need of recreation. — Who rules the world, — right well may I, Who serve him in that high relation: Amuse me, then, before you fly. Our cackler, pleased, at quickest rate Of this and that began to prate. Not he of whom old Flaceus writes. The most impertment of wights, Or any babbler, for that matter, Could more incontinently chatter. At last she offered to make known — A better spy had never flown —



All things, whatever she might see,
In travelling from tree to tree.
But, with her offer little pleased,
Nay, gathering wrath at being teased,
For such a purpose, never rove,
Replied th'-impatient bird of Jove.
Adieu, my cackling friend, adieu;
My court is not the place for you:
Heaven keep it free from such a bore.
Madge flapped her wings, and said no more.

'Tis far less easy than it seems
An entrance to the great to gain.
The honor oft hath cost extremes
Of mortal pain.
The craft of spies, the tattling art,
And looks more gracious than the heart,
Are odious there;
But still, if one would meet success,
Of different parishes the dress
He, like the pie, must wear.





THE KING, THE KITE, AND THE FALCONER.

TO HIS AUGUST HIGHNESS, MONSEIGNEUR THE PRINCE DE CONTI.

THE gods, for that themselves are good, The like in mortal monarchs would. The prime of royal rights is grace; To this e'en sweet revenge gives place. So thinks your highness, while your wrath Its cradle for its coffin hath. Achilles no such conquest knew — In this a hero less than you. That name, indeed, belongs to none, Save those who have, beneath the sun, Their hundred generous actions done. The golden age produced such powers, But truly few this age of ours. The men who now the topmost sit, Are thanked for crimes which they omit. For you, unharmed by such examples, A thousand noble deeds are winning temples,



Wherein Apollo, by the altar-fire, Shall strike your name upon his golden lyre. The gods await you in their azure dome; One age must serve for this your lower home. One age entire with you would Hymen dwell:

O that his sweetest spell
For you a destiny may bind
By such a period scarce confined!
The princess and yourself no less deserve.
Her charms as witnesses shall serve;
As witnesses, those talents high
Poured on you by the lavish sky,
Outshining all pretence of peers
Throughout your youthful years.
A Bourbon seasons grace with wit:

To that which gains esteem, in mixture fit,
He adds a portion from above
Wherewith to waken love.

To paint your joy — my task is less sublime:

I therefore turn aside to rhyme
What did a certain bird of prey.

A kite, possessor of a nest antique,
Was caught alive one day.
It was the captor's freak
That this so rare a bird
Should on his sovereign be conferred.
The kite, presented by the man of chase,
With due respect, before the monarch's face,

If our account is true,
Immediately flew
And perched upon the royal nose.
What! on the nose of majesty?
Ay, on the consecrated nose did he.
Had not the king his sceptre and his crown?

Why, if he had, or had not, 'twere all one: The royal nose, as if it graced a clown,

Was seized. The things by courtiers done, And said, and shricked, 'twere hopeless to relate.

The king in silence sate;
An outcry, for a sovereign king,
Were quite an unbecoming thing.
The bird retained the post where he had fastened;

No cries nor efforts his departure hastened.

His master called, as in an agony of pain,

Presented lure and fist, but all in vain.

It seemed as if the cursed bird, With instinct most absurd, In spite of all the noise and blows, Would roost upon that sacred nose!

The urging off of courtiers, pages, master, But roused his will to cling the faster.

At last he quit, as thus the monarch spoke: Give egress hence, imprimis, to this kite, And, next, to him who aimed at our delight.

From each his office we revoke.

The one as kite we now discharge; The other, as a forester at large. As in our station it is fit,
We do all punishment remit.
The court admired. The courtiers praised the deed
In which themselves did but so ill succeed.—

Few kings had taken such a course.

The fowler might have fared far worse;
His only crime, as of his kite,
Consisted in his want of light
About the danger there might be
In coming near to royalty.
Forsooth, their scope had wholly been
Within the woods. Was that a sin?—
By Pilpay this remarkable affair
In placed beside the Ganges? fleed

Is placed beside the Ganges' flood.

No human creature ventures, there, To shed of animals the blood:

The deed not even royalty would dare.

Know we, they say, — both lord and liege, — This bird saw not the Trojan siege? Perhaps a hero's part he bore, And there the highest helmet wore.

What once he was, he yet may be.

. Taught by Pythagoras are we, That we our forms with animals exchange;

We're kites or pigeons for a while, Then biped plodders on the soil;

And then

As volatile, again
The liquid air we range. —

Now, since two versions of this tale exist,
I'll give the other, if you list.
A certain falconer had caught
A kite, and for his sovereign thought
The bird a present rich and rare.

It may be once a century
Such game is taken from the air;
For 'tis the pink of falconry.
The captor pierced the courtier crowd,

With zeal and sweat, as if for life:

Of such a princely present proud,

His hopes of fortune sprang full rife; When, slap, the savage made him feel His talons newly armed with steel, By perching on his nasal member, As if it had been senseless timber.

Outshrieked the wight; but peals of laughter,

Which threatened ceiling, roof, and rafter, From courtier, page, and monarch broke: Who had not laughed at such a joke?

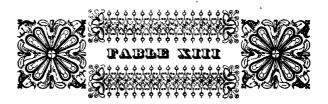
For me, so prone am I to such a sin, An empire had not held me in.

I dare not say, that, had the pope been there; He would have joined the laugh sonorous; But sad the king, I hold, who should not dare

To lead, for such a cause, in such a chorus. The gods are laughers. Spite of ebon brows, Jove joins the laugh which he allows. As history saith, the thunderer's laugh went up When limping Vulcan served the nectar cup.

Whether or not immortals here are wise, Good sense, I think, in my digression lies. For, since the moral's what we have in view, What could the falconer's fate have taught us new? Who does not notice, in the course of things, More foolish falconers than indulgent kings?





THE FOX, THE FLIES, AND THE HEDGEHOG.

A Fox, old, subtle, vigilant, and sly, — By hunters wounded, fallen in the mud, — Attracted, by the traces of his blood,

That buzzing parasite, the fly.

He blamed the gods, and wondered why
The Fates so cruelly should wish
To feast the fly on such a costly dish.

What! light on me! make me its food!

Me, me, the nimblest of the wood!

How long has fox-meat been so good?

How long has fox-meat been so good?
What serves my tail? Is it a useless weight?
Go,—Heaven confound thee, greedy reprobate!And suck thy fill from some more vulgar veins!

A hedgehog, witnessing his pains, (This fretful personage

(This fretful personage
Here graces first my page,)
Desired to set him free
From such cupidity.
My neighbor fox, said he,

My quills these rascals shall empale, And ease thy torments without fail.



Not for the world, my friend! the fox replied.

Pray let them finish their repast.

These flies are full. Should they be set aside,

New, hungrier swarms would finish me at last.

Consumers are too common here below, In court and camp, in church and state, we know.

> Old Aristotle's penetration Remarked our fable's application; It might more clearly in our nation. The fuller certain men are fed, The less the public will be bled.





LOVE AND FOLLY.

Love bears a world of mystery — His arrows, quiver, torch, and infancy: 'Tis not a trifling work to sound A sea of science so profound: And, hence, t' explain it all to-day Is not my aim, but, in my simple way, To show how that blind archer lad (And he a god!) came by the loss of sight, And eke what consequence the evil had, Or good, perhaps, if named aright — A point I leave the lover to decide, As fittest judge, who hath the matter tried. Together, on a certain day, Said Love and Folly were at play: The former yet enjoyed his eyes. Dispute arose. Love thought it wise Before the council of the gods to go, Where both of them by birth held stations; But Folly, in her lack of patience, Dealt on his forehead such a blow As sealed his orbs to all the light of heaven. Now Venus claimed that vengeance should be given. And by what force of tears yourselves may guess The woman and the mother sought redress.



The gods were deafened with her cries—
Jove, Nemesis, the stern assize
Of Orcus,—all the gods, in short,
From whom she might the boon extort.
The enormous wrong she well portrayed—
Her son a wretched groper made,
An ugly staff his steps to aid!
For such a crime, it would appear,
No punishment could be severe:
The damage, too, must be repaired.

The case maturely weighed and cast, The public weal with private squared: Poor Folly was condemned, at last,

By judgment of the court above,
To serve for aye as guide to Love.





THE RAVEN, THE GAZELLE, THE TORTOISE, AND THE RAT.

TO MADAM DE LA SABLIÈRE.

A TEMPLE I reserved you, in my rhyme: It might not be completed but with time. Already its endurance I had grounded Upon this charming art, divinely founded; And on the name of that divinity For whom its adoration was to be. These words I should have written o'er its gate-To Iris is this palace consecrate; Not her who served the queen divine; For Juno's self, and he who crowned her bliss, Had thought it for their dignity, I wis, To bear the messages of mine. Within the dome the apotheosis Should greet th' enraptured sight -All heaven, in pomp and order meet, Conducting Iris to her seat Beneath a canopy of light! The walls would amply serve to paint her life, —

A matter sweet, indeed, but little rife



In those events, which, ordered by the Fates, Cause birth, or change, or overthrow of states.

The innermost should hold her image,—
Her features, smiles, attractions there,—
Her art of pleasing without care,—
Her loveliness, that's sure of homage.
Some mortals, kneeling at her feet,—
Earth's noblest heroes,—should be seen;

Ay, demigods, and even gods, I ween:

(The worshipped of the world thinks meet, Sometimes, her altar to perfume.)

Her eyes, so far as that might be, Her soul's rich jewel should illume; Alas! but how imperfectly!

For could a heart that throbbed to bless
Its friends with boundless tenderness,—
Or could that heaven-descended mind
Which, in its matchless beauty, joined
The strength of man with woman's grace,—

Be given to sculptor to express?

O Iris, who canst charm the soul,

Nay, bind it with supreme control, —

Whom as myself I can but love,—
(Nay, not that word: as I'm a man,
Your court has placed it under ban,

And we'll dismiss it,) pray approve My filling up this hasty plan! This sketch has here received a place, A simple anecdote to grace, Where friendship shows so sweet a face, That in its features you may find
Somewhat accordant to your mind.
Not that the tale may kings beseem;
But he who winneth your esteem
Is not a monarch, placed above
The need and influence of love,
But simple mortal, void of crown,
That would for friends his life lay down—
Than which I know no friendlier act.
Four animals, in league compact,
Are now to give our noble race
A useful lesson in the case.

Rat, raven, tortoise, and gazelle, Once into firmest friendship fell. 'Twas in a home unknown to man That they their happiness began.

But safe from man there's no retreat:
Pierce you the loneliest wood,
Or dive beneath the deepest flood,
Or mount you where the eagles brood,—

His secret ambuscade you meet.
The light gazelle, in harmless play,
Amused herself abroad one day,
When, by mischance, her track was found
And followed by the baying hound—
That barbarous tool of barbarous man—
From which far, far away she ran.

At meal-time, to the others

The rat observed, — My brothers,

How happens it that we Are met to-day but three? Is Miss Gazelle so little steady? Hath she forgotten us already? Out cried the tortoise, at the word, — Were I, as Raven is, a bird,

I'd fly this instant from my seat, And learn what accident, and where, Hath kept away our sister fair,—

Our sister of the flying feet; For of her heart, dear rat, It were a shame to doubt of that.

The raven flew;

He spied afar, — the face he knew, — The poor gazelle entangled in a snare, In anguish vainly floundering there.

Straight back he turned, and gave the alarm; For to have asked the sufferer now,

The why and wherefore, when and how,

She had incurred so great a harm, -

And lose in vain debate

The turning-point of fate,

As would the master of a school,—

He was by no means such a fool.

On tidings of so sad a pith,

The three their council held forthwith.

By two it was the vote
To hasten to the spot
Where lay the poor gazelle.
Our friend here in his shell,
I think, will do as well

To guard the house, the raven said;
For, with his creeping pace,
When would he reach the place?
Not till the deer were dead.
Eschewing more debate,
They flew to aid their mate,
That luckless mountain roe.
The tortoise, too, resolved to go.
Behold him plodding on behind,
And plainly cursing, in his mind,
The fate that left his legs to lack,
And glued his dwelling to his back.
The snare was cut by Rongemail,
(For so the rat they rightly hail.)
Conceive their joy yourself you may.

And, Who hath filehed my prey?

Cried he, upon the spot

Where now his prey was not.—

A hole hid Rongemail;

A tree, the bird as well;

The woods, the free gazelle.

The hunter, well nigh mad,

To find no inkling could be had,

Espied the tortoise in his path,

Just then the hunter came that way,

And straightway checked his wrath.

Why let my courage flag
Because my snare has chanced to miss?

I'll have a supper out of this.

He said, and put it in his bag.

And it had paid the forfeit so,
Had not the raven told the roe,
Who from her covert came,
Pretending to be lame.
The man, right eager to pursue,
Aside his wallet threw,
Which Rongemail took care
To serve as he had done the snare;
Thus putting to an end
The hunter's supper on his friend.
'Tis thus sage Pilpay's tale I follow.

Were I the ward of golden-haired Apollo, It were, by favor of that god, easy—

And surely for your sake —
As long a tale to make
As is the Iliad or Odyssey.

Gray Rougemail the hero's part should play, Though each would be as needful in his way.

He of the mansion portable awoke
Sir Raven, by the words he spoke,
To act the spy, and then the swift express.
The light gazelle alone had had th' address
The hunter to engage, and furnish time
For Rongemail to do his deed sublime.
Thus each his part performed. Which wins the
prize?

The heart, so far as in my judgment lies.





THE WOODS AND THE WOODMAN.

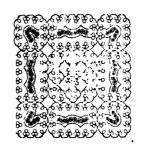
A CERTAIN wood-chopper lost or broke

From his axe's eye a bit of oak. The forest must needs be somewhat spared While such a loss was being repaired. Came the man at last, and humbly prayed That the woods would kindly lend to him — A moderate loan — a single limb, Whereof might another helve be made, And his axe should elsewhere drive its trade. O, the oaks and firs that then might stand, A pride and a joy, throughout the land, For their ancientness and glorious charms! The innocent Forest lent him arms: But bitter indeed was her regret: For the wretch, his axe new-helved and whet, Did nought but his benefactress spoil Of the finest trees that graced her soil; And ceaselessly was she made to groan, Doing penance for that fatal loan.

Behold the world-stage and its actors, Where benefits hurt benefactors!—



A weary theme, and full of pain;
For where's the shade so cool and sweet,
Protecting strangers from the heat,
But might of such a wrong complain?
Alas! I vex myself in vain:
Ingratitude, do what I will,
Is sure to be the fashion still.





THE FOX, THE WOLF, AND THE HORSE.

A rox, though young, by no means raw,
Had seen a horse—the first he ever saw:
Ho! neighbor wolf, said he to one quite green,
A creature in our meadow I have seen,—

Sleek, grand! I seem to see him yet,—
The finest beast I ever met.
Is he a stouter one than we?
The wolf demanded, eagerly.
Some picture of him let me see.

If I could paint, said fox, I should delight
T' anticipate your pleasure at the sight;
But come; who knows? perhaps it is a prey
By fortune offered in our way.

by fortune onered in our way.

The horse, turned loose.

They went. The horse, turned loose to graze, Not liking much their looks or ways,

Was just about to gallop off.
Sir, said the fox, your humble servants, we
Make bold to ask you what your name may be.

The horse, an animal with brains enough, Replied, Sirs, you yourselves may read my name; My shoer round my heel hath writ the same.



The fox excused himself for want of knowledge:

Me, sir, my parents did not educate,—
So poor, a hole was their entire estate.

My friend, the wolf, however, taught at college,
Could read it were it even Greek.

The wolf, to flattery weak,
Approached, to verify the boast;
For which, four teeth he lost.

The high-raised hoof came down with such a blow,
As laid him bleeding on the ground full low.

My brother, said the fox, this shows how just
What once was taught me by a fox of wit,—
Which on thy jaws this animal hath writ,—

"All unknown things the wise mistrust."



vol. 11. 40



THE FOX AND THE TURKEYS.

Against a robber fox, a tree
Some turkeys served as citadel.
That villain, much provoked to see
Each standing there as sentinel,
Cried out, Such witless birds
At me stretch out their necks, and gobble!
No, by the powers! I'll give them trouble.
He verified his words.

The moon, that shined full on the oak, Seemed then to help the turkey folk. But fox, in arts of siege well versed, Ransacked his bag of tricks accursed. He feigned himself about to climb; Walked on his hinder legs sublime;

Walked on his hinder legs sublime: Then death most aptly counterfeited, And seemed anon resuscitated.

A practiser of wizard arts
Could not have filled so many parts.
In moonlight he contrived to raise
His tail, and make it seem a blaze:
And countless other tricks like that.
Meanwhile, no turkey slept or sat.



Their constant vigilance at length,
As hoped the fox, wore out their strength.
Bewildered by the rigs he run,
They lost their balance one by one.
As Renard slew, he laid aside,
Till nearly half of them had died;
Then proudly to his larder bore,
And laid them up, an ample store.

A foe, by being over-heeded, Has often in his plan succeeded.





THE APE.

There is an ape in Paris,

To which was given a wife:

Like many a one that marries,

This ape, in brutal strife,

Soon beat her out of life.

Their infant cries, — perhaps not fed, —

But cries, I ween, in vain;

The father laughs: his wife is dead,

And he has other loves again,

Which he will also beat, I think, —

Returned from tayern drowned in drink.

For aught that's good, you need not look
Among the imitative tribe;
A monkey be it, or what makes a book—
The worse, I deem—the aping scribe.









THE SCYTHIAN PHILOSOPHER.

A Scythian philosopher austere,
Resolved his rigid life somewhat to cheer,
Performed the tour of Greece, saw many things,
But, best, a sage,—one such as Virgil sings,—
A simple, rustic man, that equaled kings;
From whom the gods would hardly bear the palm,

Like them unawed, content, and calm.
His fortune was a little nook of land;
And there the Scythian found him, hook in hand,
His fruit-trees pruning. Here he cropped
A barren branch, there slashed and lopped,

Correcting Nature every where,
Who paid with usury his care.
Pray, why this wasteful havoc, sir?—
So spoke the wondering traveller;—
Can it, I ask, in reason's name,
Be wise these harmless trees to maim?
Fling down that instrument of crime,
And leave them to the scythe of Time.
Full soon, unhastened, they will go
To deck the banks of streams below.
Replied the tranquil gardener,
I humbly crave your pardon, sir;

Excess is all my hook removes, By which the rest more fruitful proves.

The philosophic traveller,—
Once more within his country cold,—
Himself of pruning-hook laid hold,
And made a use most free and bold;
Prescribed to friends, and counseled neighbors,
To imitate his pruning labors.

The finest limbs he did not spare,
But pruned his orchard past all reason,
Regarding neither time nor season,
Nor taking of the moon a care.

All withered, drooped, and died.

This Scythian I set beside
The indiscriminating Stoic.
The latter, with a blade heroic,
Retrenches, from his spirit sad,
Desires and passions, good and bad,
Not sparing e'en a harmless wish.
Against a tribe so Vandalish
With earnestness I here protest.
They main our hearts: they sture

They maim our hearts; they stupefy Their strongest springs, if not their best; They make us cease to live before we die.







THE ELEPHANT AND THE APE OF JUPITER.

'Twixt elephant and beast of horned nose About precedence a dispute arose, Which they determined to decide by blows. The day was fixed, when came a messenger

To say the ape of Jupiter Was swiftly earthward seen to bear His bright caduceus through the air. This monkey, named in history Gill,

The elephant at once believed A high commission had received To witness, by his sovereign's will,

The aforesaid battle fought.

Uplifted by the glorious thought, The beast was prompt on Monsieur Gill to wait, But found him slow, in usual forms of state,

> His high credentials to present. The ape, however, ere he went,

Bestowed a passing salutation.

His excellency would have heard

The subject matter of legation:

But not a word!

His fight, so far from stirring heaven,— The news was not received there, even! What difference sees the impartial sky
Between an elephant and fly?
Our monarch, doting on his object,
Was forced himself to break the subject.
My cousin Jupiter, said he,

Will shortly, from his throne supreme,

A most important combat see, For all his court a thrilling theme.

What combat? said the ape, with serious face. Is't possible you should not know the case?—
The elephant exclaimed—not know, dear sir,

That Lord Rhinoceros disputes
With me precedence of the brutes?
That Elephantis is at war

With savage hosts of Rhinocer?
You know these realms, not void of fame?
I joy to learn them now by name,
Returned Sir Gill, for, first or last,
No lisp of them has ever passed,
Throughout our dome so blue and vast.

Abashed, the elephant replied,
What came you, then, to do?—
Between two emmets to divide

A spire of grass in two. We take of all a care; And, as to your affair,

Before the gods, who view with equal eyes The small and great, it hath not chanced to rise.





THE FOOL AND THE SAGE.

A root pursued, with club and stone,
A sage, who said, My friend, well done!
Receive this guinea for your pains;
They well deserve far higher gains.
The workman's worthy of his hire,
'Tis said. There comes a wealthy squire,
Who hath wherewith thy works to pay;
To him direct thy gifts, and they
Shall gain their proper recompense.

Urged by the hope of gain,
Upon the wealthy citizen
The fool repeated the offence.
His pay this time was not in gold.

Upon the witless man
A score of ready footmen ran,
And on his back, in full, his wages told.

In courts, such fools afflict the wise;

They raise the laugh at your expense.

To check their babble, were it sense

Their folly meetly to chastise?

Perhaps 'twill take a stronger man.

Then make them worry one who can.



THE ENGLISH FOX.

TO MADAM HARVEY.

Sound reason and a tender heart
With thee are friends that never part.
A hundred traits might swell the roll; —
Suffice to name thy nobleness of soul;
Thy power to guide both men and things;

Thy temper open, bland and free,
A gift that draweth friends to thee,
To which thy firm affection clings,
Unmarred by age or change of clime,
Or tempests of this stormy time;
—
All which deserve, in highest lyric,
A rich and lofty panegyric:
But no such thing wouldst thou desire,
Whom pomp displeases, praises tire.
Hence mine is simple, short, and plain;

Yet, madam, I would fain
Tack on a word or two
Of homage to your country due, —
A country well beloved by you.

With mind to match the outward case, The English are a thinking race.



THE ENGLISH SHEET STATES IN STATES

They pierce all subjects through and through; Well armed with facts, they hew their way, And give to science boundless sway. Quite free from flattery, I say, Your countrymen, for penetration, Must bear the palm from every nation; For e'en the dogs they breed excel Our own in nicety of smell. Your foxes, too, are cunninger, As readily we may infer From one that practised, 'tis believed, A stratagem the best conceived. The wretch, once, in the utmost strait By dogs of nose so delicate, Approached a gallows, where, A lesson to like passengers, Or clothed in feathers or in furs, Some badgers, owls, and foxes, pendent were. Their comrade, in his pressing need, Arranged himself among the dead. I seem to see old Hannibal Outwit some Roman general, And sit securely in his tent, The legions on some other scent. But certain dogs, kept back To tell the errors of the pack, Arriving where the traitor hung, A fault in fullest chorus sung. Though by their bark the welkin rung, Their master made them hold the tongue,

Suspecting not a trick so odd.
Said he, The rogue's beneath the sod.
My dogs, that never saw such jokes,
Won't bark beyond these honest folks.

The rogue would try the trick again. He did so to his cost and pain. Again with dogs the welkin rings; Again our fox from gallows swings; But though he hangs with greater faith, This time, he does it to his death.

So uniformly is it true,

A stratagem is best when new.
The hunter, had himself been hunted,
So apt a trick had not invented;
Not that his wit had been deficient;
With that, it cannot be denied,
Your English folks are well-provisioned;
But wanting love of life sufficient,
Full many an Englishman has died.

One word to you, and I must quit My much-inviting subject:

A long eulogium is a project
For which my lyre is all unfit.
The song or verse is truly rare,
Which can its meed of incense bear,
And yet amuse the general ear,
Or wing its way to lands afar.
Your prince once told you, I have heard,
(An able judge, as rumor says,)

That he one dash of love preferred

To all a sheet could hold of praise.

Accept — 'tis all I crave — the offering
Which here my muse has dared to bring —
Her last, perhaps, of earthly acts;
She blushes at its sad defects.
Still, by your favor of my rhyme,
Might not the self-same homage please, the while,
The dame who fills your northern clime
With wingéd emigrants sublime
From Cytherea's isle?
By this, you understand, I mean
Love's guardian goddess, Mazarin.





THE SUN AND THE FROGS.

Long from the monarch of the stars

The daughters of the mud received
Support and aid; nor dearth nor wars,

Meanwhile, their teeming nation grieved.
They spread their empire far and wide
Through every marsh, by every tide.
The queens of swamps—I mean no more

Than simply frogs (great names are cheap)Caballed together on the shore,

And cursed their patron from the deep,
And came to be a perfect bore.
Pride, rashness, and ingratitude,
The progeny of fortune good,
Soon brought them to a bitter cry,—
The end of sleep for earth and sky.
Their clamors, if they did not craze,
Would truly seem enough to raise
All living things to mutiny
Against the power of Nature's eye.
The sun, according to their croak,
Was turning all the world to smoke.



It now behoved to take alarm, And promptly powerful troops to arm.

Their croaking embassies:

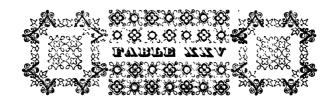
To all their states they went,

And all their colonies.

To hear them talk, the all
That rides upon this whirling ball,
Of men and things, was left at stake
Upon the mud that skirts a lake!
The same complaint, in fens and bogs,
Still ever strains their lungs;
And yet these much-complaining frogs

Had better hold their tongues;
For, should the sun in anger rise,
And hurl his vengeance from the skies,
That kingless, half aquatic crew
Their impudence would sorely rue.





THE LEAGUE OF THE RATS.

A mouse was once in mortal fear Of a cat that watched her portal near. What could be done in such a case? With prudent care she left the catship, And courted, with a humble grace, A neighbor of a higher race, Whose lordship — I should say, his ratship. Lay in a great hotel; And who had boasted oft, 'tis said, Of living wholly without dread. Well, said this braggart, well, Dame Mouse, what should I do? Alone I cannot rout The foe that threatens you. I'll rally all the rats about, And then I'll play him such a trick! The mouse her courtesy dropped, And off the hero scampered quick, Nor till he reached the buttery stopped,



Where scores of rats were clustered,
In riotous extravagance
All feasting at the host's expense.
To him, arriving there much flustered,
Indeed, quite out of breath,

A rat among the feasters saith,
What news? what news? I pray you, speak.
The rat, recovering breath to squeak,
Replied, To tell the matter in a trice,
It is, that we must promptly aid the mice;
For old Raminagrab is making

Among their ranks a dreadful quaking. This cat, of cats the very devil, When mice are gone, will do us evil.

True, true, said each and all;
To arms! to arms! the cry and call.

Some ratties by their fears
Were melted e'en to tears.
It mattered not a whisk,
Nor checked the valor brisk.

Each took upon his back Some cheese in haversack,

And roundly swore to risk

His careass in the cause.

They marched as to a feast,

Not flinching in the least,—
But quite too late, for in his jaws
The cat already held the mouse.

They rapidly approached the house -

To save their friend, beyond a doubt.
Just then the cat came growling out,
The mouse beneath his whiskered nose,
And marched along before his foes.
At such a voice, our rats discreet,
Foreboding a defeat,
Effected, in a style most fleet,
A fortunate retreat.
Back hurried to his hole each rat,
And afterwards took care to shun the cat.







DAPHNIS AND ALCIMADURE.

AN IMITATION OF THEOCRITUS.

TO MADAM DE LA MÉSANGÈRE.

Offspring of her to whom, to-day,
While from thy lovely self away,
A thousand hearts their homage pay,*
Besides the throngs whom friendship binds to please,
And some whom love presents thee on their knees!

A mandate which I cannot thrust aside Between you both impels me to divide Some of the incense which the dews distil Upon the roses of a sacred hill,

And which, by secret of my trade,
Is sweet and most delicious made.
To you I say,....but all to say
Would task me far beyond my day;
I need judiciously to choose;
Thus husbanding my voice and muse

^{*} Madam de la Mésangère was the daughter of Madam de la Sablière.

Whose strength and leisure soon will fail.
I'll only praise your tender heart, and hale,
Exalted feelings, wit, and grace,
In which there's none can claim a higher place,
Excepting her whose praise is your entail.
Let not too many thorns forbid to touch
These roses — I may call them such —
If Love should ever say as much.
By him it will be better said, indeed;
And them who his advices will not heed,
Scourge fearfully will he,
As you shall shortly see.

A blooming miracle of yore Despised his godship's sovereign power; They called her name Alcimadure. A haughty creature, fierce and wild, She sported, Nature's tameless child. Rough paths her wayward feet would lead To darkest glens of mossy trees; Or she would dance on daisied mead, With nought of law but her caprice. A fairer could not be, Nor crueler, than she. Still charming in her sternest mien, — E'en when her haughty look debarred, — What had she been to lover, in The fortress of her kind regard! Daphnis, a high-born shepherd swain,

Had loved this maiden to his bane.

Not one regardful look or smile, Nor e'en a gracious word, the while, Relieved the fierceness of his pain. O'erwearied with a suit so vain,

His hope was but to die;
No power had he to fly.
He sought, impelled by dark despair,
The portals of the cruel fair.

Alas! the winds his only listeners were!

The mistress gave no entrance there—
No entrance to the palace where,
Ingrate, against her natal day,
She joined the treasures sweet and gay
In garden or in wild-wood grown,
To blooming beauty all her own.

I hoped, he cried,

Before your eyes I should have died; But, ah! too deeply I have won your hate;

Nor should it be surprising news
To me, that you should now refuse
To lighten thus my cruel fate.

My sire, when I shall be no more, Is charged to lay your feet before

The heritage your heart neglected. With this my pasturage shall be connected, My trusty dog, and all that he protected;

And, of my goods which then remain, My mourning friends shall rear a fane.

There shall your image stand, midst rosy bowers,
Reviving through the ceaseless hours
An altar built of living flowers.

Near by, my simple monument
Shall this short epitaph present:
"Here Daphnis died of love. Stop, passenger,
And say thou, with a falling tear,
This youth here fell, unable to endure
The ban of proud Alcimadure."

He would have added, but his heart
Now felt the last, the fatal dart.
Forth marched the maid, in triumph decked,
And of his murder little recked.
In vain her steps her own attendants checked,

And plead

That she, at least, should shed,
Upon her lover dead,
Some tears of due respect.
The rosy god, of Cytherea born,

She ever treated with the deepest scorn: Contemning him, his laws, and means of damage, She drew her train to dance around his image,

When, woful to relate,

The statue fell, and crushed her with its weight!

A voice forth issued from a cloud, —

And echo bore the words aloud

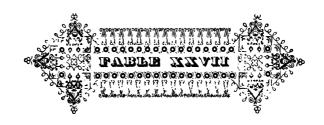
Throughout the air wide spread,—
"Let all now love—the insensible is dead."

Meanwhile, down to the Stygian tide

The shade of Daphnis hied,

And quaked and wondered there to meet The maid, a ghostess, at his feet. All Erebus awakened wide,
To hear that beauteous homicide
Beg pardon of the swain who died,
For being deaf to love confessed,
As was Ulysses to the prayer
Of Ajax, begging him to spare,
Or as was Dido's faithless guest.





THE ARBITER, THE ALMONER, AND THE HERMIT.

THREE saints, for their salvation jealous, Pursued, with hearts alike most zealous, By routes diverse, their common aim. All highways lead to Rome: the same Of heaven our rivals deeming true, Each chose alone his pathway to pursue. Moved by the cares, delays, and crosses, Attached to suits by legal process, One gave himself as judge, without reward, For earthly fortune having small regard. Since there are laws, to legal strife Man damns himself for half his life. For half? — Three fourths! — perhaps the whole! The hope possessed our umpire's soul, That on his plan he should be able To cure this vice detestable. — The second chose the hospitals. I give him praise: to solace pain Is charity not spent in vain, While men in part are animals.



The sick—for things went then as now they go—Gave trouble to the almoner, I trow.

Impatient, sour, complaining ever,

As racked by rheum, or parched with fever, —

His favorites are such and such; With them he watches over-much,

And lets us die, they say. —
Such sore complaints from day to day
Were nought to those that did await
The reconciler of debate.

His judgments suited neither side;

Forsooth, in either party's view,

He never held the balance true, But swerved in every cause he tried.

Discouraged by such speech, the arbiter Betook himself to see the almoner.

As both received but murmurs for their fees,
They both retired, in not the best of moods,
To break their troubles to the silent woods,
And hold communion with the ancient trees.

There, underneath a rugged mountain,

• Beside a clear and silent fountain,

A place revered by winds, to sun unknown, They found the other saint, who lived alone.

Forthwith they asked his sage advice.
Your own, he answered, must suffice;
Who but yourselves your wants should know?
To know one's self, is, here below,

VOL. 11. 43

The first command of the Supreme.

Have you obeyed, among the bustling throngs?

Such knowledge to tranquillity belongs;

Elsewhere to seek were fallacy extreme.

Disturb the water — do you see your face?

See we ourselves within a troubled breast?

A murky cloud, in such a case,

Though once it were a crystal vase!

But, brothers, let it simply rest,

And each shall see his features there impressed.

Such was the hermit's answer brief; And, happily, it gained belief.

For inward thought a desert home is best.

But business, still, from life must not be stricken. Since men will doubtless sue at law, and sicken, Physicians there must be, and advocates, — Whereof, thank God, no lack the world awaits, While wealth and honors are the well-known baits. Yet, in the stream of common wants when thrown, What busy mortal but forgets his own? O, you who give the public all your care,

Be it as judge, or prince, or minister,
Disturbed by countless accidents most sinister,
By adverse gales abased, debased by fair, —
Yourself you never see, nor see you aught.
Comes there a moment's rest for serious thought,
There comes a flatterer too, and brings it all to
nought.

This lesson seals our varied page:
O, may it teach from age to age!
To kings I give it, to the wise propose.
Where could my labors better close?

